2BU! / C1

Dapitan Rescue volunteers and the fire in their hearts

ACROSS / A18

Eastern Visayas braces for tropical storm 'Milenyo'

METRO / A23

Estafa, robbery, theft raps filed against ex-QC Rep. Dante Liban

SPORTS / A27

Oscar De La Hoya confirms 7-fight deal with Pacquiao

Cruel fortune: Korean lotto winner loses $1M

PERA NA NAGING BATO PA!

SEOUL—ECSTASY TURNED to agony for a South Korean lottery winner when he presented a winning ticket only to be told he could not claim the prize of $1 million because of a printing mistake, officials said yesterday.

The Prime Minister's

CRUEL/ A21

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, September 27, 2006 ★★★ 6 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 291 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Thai junta to stay even after new PM takes office

BANGKOK—THAILAND'S RULING JUNTA WILL remain in place after a civilian prime minister takes office to keep a tight check on the new government, the Army general who led last week's coup said Tuesday.

Gen. Sondhi Boonyaratkalin said the military leadership would transform itself into a National Security Council to work alongside the new premier, who is expected to be named later this week.

THAI JUNTA/ A9

BOYETTE RIMBAN/CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

UP PROFESSOR Jerome Bailen, a forensic anthropologist, views the skeletal remains of Luz Aniasco Laguna in the hinterlands of Cebu City.

Red purge victims' kin find partial closure in unmarked Cebu grave

By Luz Rimban
Contributor

CONSOLACION ANIASCO NIDUELAN somehow knew she would find her sister in Cebu.

Several times in the past 20 years, Aling Cion, as she is called, saved whatever she could from her pay as a street sweeper and bought passage to Cebu. She would get off at the pier.

But with no idea where to look, she simply wandered around the waterfront for hours, scanning faces in the crowd and hoping one of them would be that of her younger sister, Luz Aniasco Laguna.

Luz and her husband, Herculano Laguna, had been labor organizers in Davao in the early 1980s.

They went to Manila for a visit in 1984, telling relatives they were on their way to new jobs in Mandaue, Cebu.

Aling Cion's last contact with the couple was when she saw them off at Manila's North Harbor as they prepared to board the vessel with their then 3-year-old son, Herlo.

Aling Cion, now 61, has since been searching for the Laguna family. Her search finally came to an end earlier this month when she witnessed the exhumation of what were believed to be the remains of Luz and Herculano Laguna.

RED PURGE/ A21

PALPARAN: I'm vocal against the communist movement.

JOAN BONDOC

Justices question Cha-cha signatures

'I cannot hear God's voice here'

By Armand N. Nocum and Jerome Aning

SUPREME COURT JUSTICES yesterday openly attacked or voiced doubts on the integrity of the 6.3 million signatures gathered by Charter change groups, their source of funding and the role the local governments played in collecting them.

THE SUPREME Court starts hearing the oral arguments of the proponents and oppositors on the validity of the people's initiative to amend the Constitution in Manila on Tuesday.

EKA NICKMATULHUDA/CONTRIBUTOR

In a marathon hearing, 12 of the 15 justices raised concerns on various issues involved in the plan to rewrite the country's Constitution and set up a new parliamentary government using the people's initiative mode.

Some questioned a supposed plan under a new Charter to clip the powers of the judiciary by doing away with the courts' "extraordinary certiorari" power—or the power to review the acts of the executive and legislative branches of government.

Wrapping up the justices' interpellation of the pro-initiative lawyers, Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban said the petitioners should understand the justices' concern about Cha-cha since the court was the defender of the Constitution.

"Any attempt to change or worse, mangle, the Constitution must be viewed by this court with strict scrutiny," Panganiban told a packed session hall.

The justices expressed their concerns during the hearing that could have far-reaching implications on the country's political future and that of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The high tribunal heard oral arguments on a petition of local government executives and their citizens' wing, Sigaw ng Bayan, seeking approval of a Malacañang-backed people's initiative to rewrite the Constitution that would bury the decades-old presidential system and set up a parliamentary form of government.

Of the justices who initially questioned the petitioners, Associate Justice Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez was the most vocal and passionate in her line of

JUSTICES/ A19

Palparan tells Melo body: Just propaganda

By Fe Zamora

ESCORTED BY COMBAT-READY troops and antiriot cops, retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan yesterday appeared before the Melo Commission and denied that he or his men were behind the killing and abduction of scores of leftist activists in Mindoro, Eastern Visayas and Central Luzon since 2001.

Palparan, whom militant groups had labeled a "butcher," said the accusations were part of the propaganda of communist groups now denied "financial support" in areas that he had liberated from communism.

"These are just propaganda," said Palparan, who retired from the military service early this month. "They charge me with these incidents because they are out to discredit me and even get my head."

As he was speaking, police cars patrolled the streets surrounding the Integrated Bar of the Philippines building on Julia Vargas Avenue in Pasig City. Two fire trucks and an ambulance were on standby.

PALPARAN/ A19

Testimonies expected, says 'Nicole' lawyer

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE TESTIMONIES OF THE FOUR US Marines accused of raping a Filipino woman were "expected" and "self-serving," the private lawyer of the 23-year-old complainant said yesterday.

Evalyn Ursua, lawyer of complainant "Nicole," pointed out that the defense panel presented no witness to corroborate what the Marines said happened before and after the purported crime—events that, she said, many others might have seen.

"Their statements about Nicole walking to the van, that she was not drunk, and that she was not dumped [after the purported rape] are all self-serving, and that's expected of them. If that is true, they should present a corroborating witness outside of themselves," Ursua said on the phone a day after the defense panel rested its case.

TESTIMONIES/ A5

Wounded dolphin dies; stress blamed

WORKERS from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources bury the dolphin at the research center's fish cemetery in Dagupan City on Tuesday.

RAY B. ZAMBRANO/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Inquirer Northern Luzon

DAGUPAN CITY—IT WAS A SAD day for marine conservationists when the wounded dolphin that beached itself in San Fabian town on Saturday died yesterday.

The 10-foot Risso's dolphin (*Grampus griseus*) had shown signs of recovery after receiving medication at the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources research center here where it was taken on Monday morning.

Earlier, Westly Rosario, center chief, said there was a chance the dolphin would survive as it was already in an "upright position" hours after it was put in a tank. It was belly-up when it was first put in the tank that had running seawater.

Rosario said the dolphin had a wound in the left mouth and had welts around its body,

WOUNDED/ A5

RP gaining in fight vs graft, says graftbuster

By Christine O. Avendaño

RECORD REVENUE COLLECTIONS, declining poverty incidence and the shrinking number of firms giving bribes to government officials show that government efforts to curb corruption were making headway, Hong Kong-based anticorruption consultant Tony Kwok said yesterday.

Kwok gave the assessment as President Macapagal-Arroyo thanked him for helping the administration review how government agencies were doing in putting in place measures to prevent corruption in the workplace.

At a press briefing in Malacañang, Kwok said there had been "tremendous progress" in the fight against corruption since December 2004 when heads of government agencies were "not doing anything to fight corruption."

Kwok, former deputy commis-

RP GAINING/ A19

Second FrontPage

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Samar , Sorsogon and Catanduanes will experience stormy weather. The rest of Visayas, Central Luzon and Southern Luzon and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with rainshowers. Northern Luzon will be cloudy to cloudy with rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/09/26/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Stormy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Stormy
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Stormy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Palace seeks P1.3B for 'intel'

By Michael Lim Ubac

MALACAÑANG HAS ASKED Congress to allocate a lump sum amount of P1.267 billion as intelligence funds for the executive department in 2007, more than half of which—P650 million—will go to the Office of the President.

The INQUIRER obtained a copy of the proposed confidential and intelligence expenses in the 2007 General Appropriations Act.

It showed that Malacañang had asked for an increase of P17 million from the P1.25-billion allocated for its CIE this year.

The government is operating on a rolled-over 2005 budget.

Under the proposed 2007 budget, the intelligence funds under the control of the Department of National Defense will increase from P51.64 billion to P54.46 billion next year.

House legislators have said that intelligence funds are always questionable because they are not subject to the usual auditing procedures.

"It is subject to audit but the audit is confidential at the central office of the Commission on Audit," said Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez.

Bayan Muna Rep. Joel Virador asked how much of these "confidential intelligence expenses" were actually used on anti-insurgency campaigns or "to kill activists."

Surigao del Norte Rep. Robert Ace Barbers, chair of the House committee on accounts, said there were certain "dangers" to Congress allocating lump sum amounts for intelligence-gathering purposes.

"There should be a declaration of purposes such as counter-terrorism, battling drugs, gambling lords and insurgents. But as to the details of this funds, these are no longer subject to audit," he said.

Because of the "confidential nature" of the funds, COA had come up with a different system "to verify, check and audit these types of funds," he said.

AFP chief moves closer to 3-star rank

By TJ Burgonio

ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPpines Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon has moved a step closer to confirmation to three-star rank after a Commission on Appointments committee voted to include his name for consideration at today's plenary session of the commission.

Esperon, however, would have to hurdle another confirmation hearing later after he was recently promoted to four-star rank by President Macapagal-Arroyo in keeping with his appointment as AFP chief of staff.

Esperon's promotions had been delayed after his name cropped up on an audiotape that purportedly showed Ms Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano had attempted to rig the 2004 presidential poll results in what came to be known as the "Hello Garci" wiretap scandal.

Whether he will get his third star today remains uncertain, however.

Majority of the commission's national defense and security committee's members yesterday voted down opposition Sen. Sergio Osmeña III's motion to defer consideration of Esperon's nomination and voted to include his name in today's plenary session.

Yesterday's hearing started tensely, but it was over in 30 minutes without Esperon being asked a single question after Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile moved to adjourn after the voting.

"Since the commission voted on the matter with dispatch, I could only be very thankful to them," a relieved Esperon told reporters after he shook hands with the committee members. "I can't hide that I'm happy about it."

Invoking Section 20

Osmeña, however, warned he would invoke Section 20 of the CA rules to block Esperon's promotion at today's plenary if Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, another opposition lawmaker, asked him to.

"It's well within Senator Estrada's right to invoke Section 20," Osmeña told reporters, referring to Estrada's motion to question Esperon made at another hearing. "If he asks me, I'll have to [invoke Section 20]."

By citing Section 20, any member of the commission could defer the appointment of an official in the plenary, without explanation or questions.

Rep. Jurdin Jesus Romualdo, CA defense committee chair, said Esperon's nomination would be thrown back to the committee if the section was invoked today, otherwise it would be considered approved.

Approval would mean the committee would next tackle Esperon's promotion to four-star rank, to which he was nominated after President Arroyo appointed him AFP chief of staff in July.

The appointments of over 60 other government officials and military officers, including Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, will also be tackled at today's plenary.

Estrada failed to make it to yesterday's hearing because he had to attend to a son who was stricken with dengue.

"I think the reason why he's not here is a well-founded [one]," Osmeña said. "We have to defer the consideration of his [Esperon's] nomination for another day so that Estrada will have a chance to propound questions."

Osmeña also asked the committee to subpoena retired Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani, who was mentioned in the Garci tapes as having links to the opposition and was reportedly relieved by Esperon before the May 2004 elections.

At this point, Enrile, moved that the committee vote on Osmeña's motion for deferment, which was immediately seconded. Nine members, including Enrile, voted against it; Osmeña and Sen. Alfredo Lim voted for it.

Shortly after, Enrile made another motion to include Esperon's name for approval in the plenary. On this motion, nine voted yes, Osmeña voted no, while Lim abstained. Enrile then moved to adjourn the hearing.

Malacañang yesterday asked the CA to act on the confirmation of Gonzalez and Esperon.

"Secretary Gonzalez and General Esperon have shown solid performance and courage from Day One in their respective offices," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

Bunye said the two enjoyed the confidence of President Arroyo and that "no amount of black propaganda and character assassination will prod her to drop their appointments."

With Christine O. Avendaño

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Imelda gets clearance to go to HK

By Tina G. Santos

FORMER FIRST LADY IMELDA Marcos can now proceed with her plan to travel to Hong Kong for medical treatment.

Imelda posted a travel bond of P320,000 or P10,000 for each of the 32 counts of alleged dollar-salting pending before a Manila court after the Sandiganbayan lifted yesterday its objections to her leaving the country.

The widow of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos is also facing a string of civil and criminal charges in connection with her husband's reported $683 million Swiss bank deposits and needs the court's permission to travel abroad.

Judge Silvino Pampilo of the Manila Regional Trial Court, citing "humanitarian reasons," had earlier granted her urgent motion for leave to travel abroad from Sept. 5 to Oct. 5. The Sandiganbayan initially objected, but gave in to her motion for reconsideration.

Imelda said she needs to go to Hong Kong to seek alternative medical treatment for her hip and knee problems.

"Since it's already Sept. 26, she can just file a motion for extension of the original date she stated in her motion," Pampilo said.

"She may leave anytime now, since she already posted the travel bond," said the judge. She is allowed to go only to Hong Kong, China.

The judge likewise instructed Imelda to provide the court with a photocopy of her passport "with a stamp of arrival by the Bureau of Immigration" within five days after her return.

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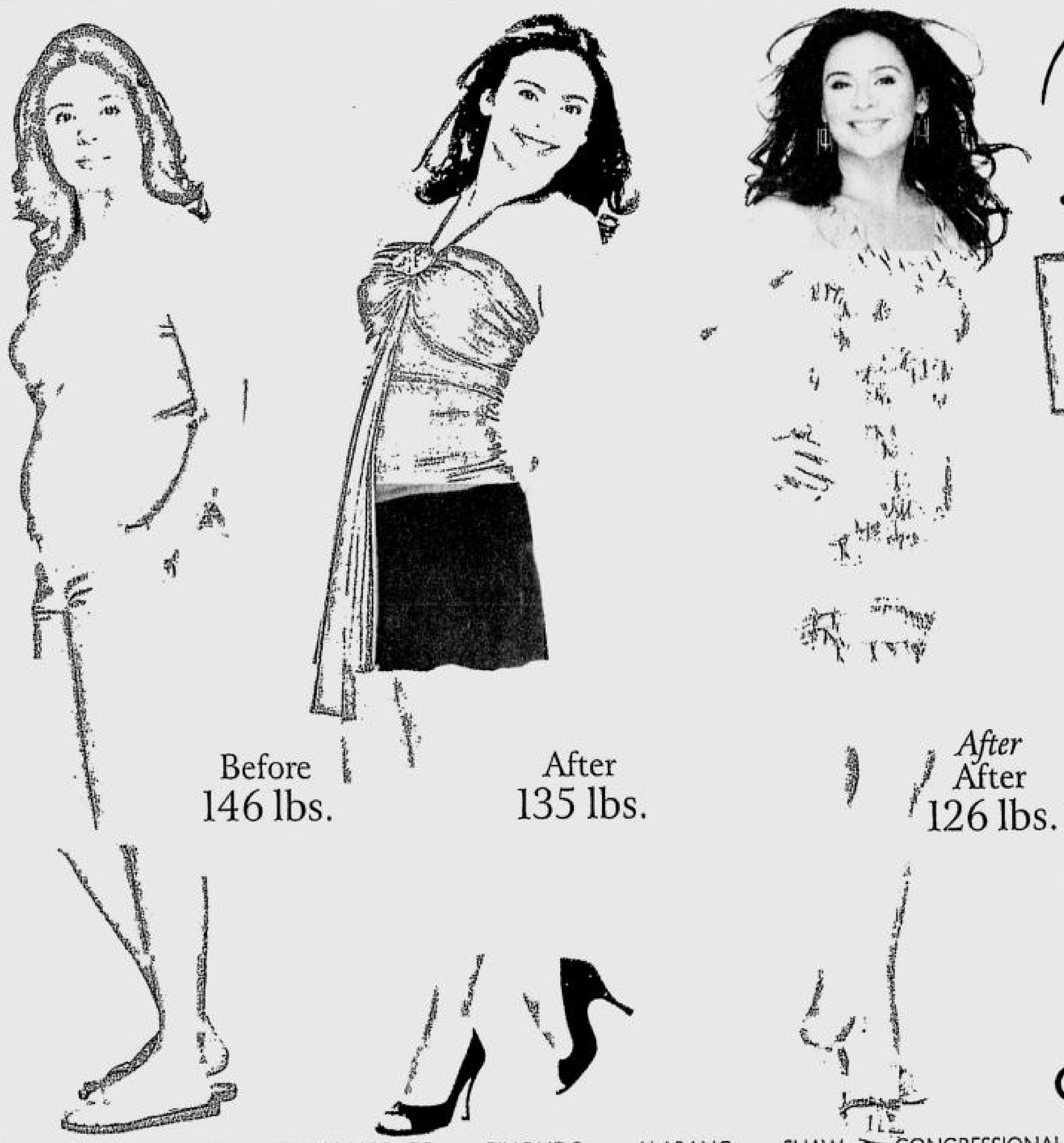

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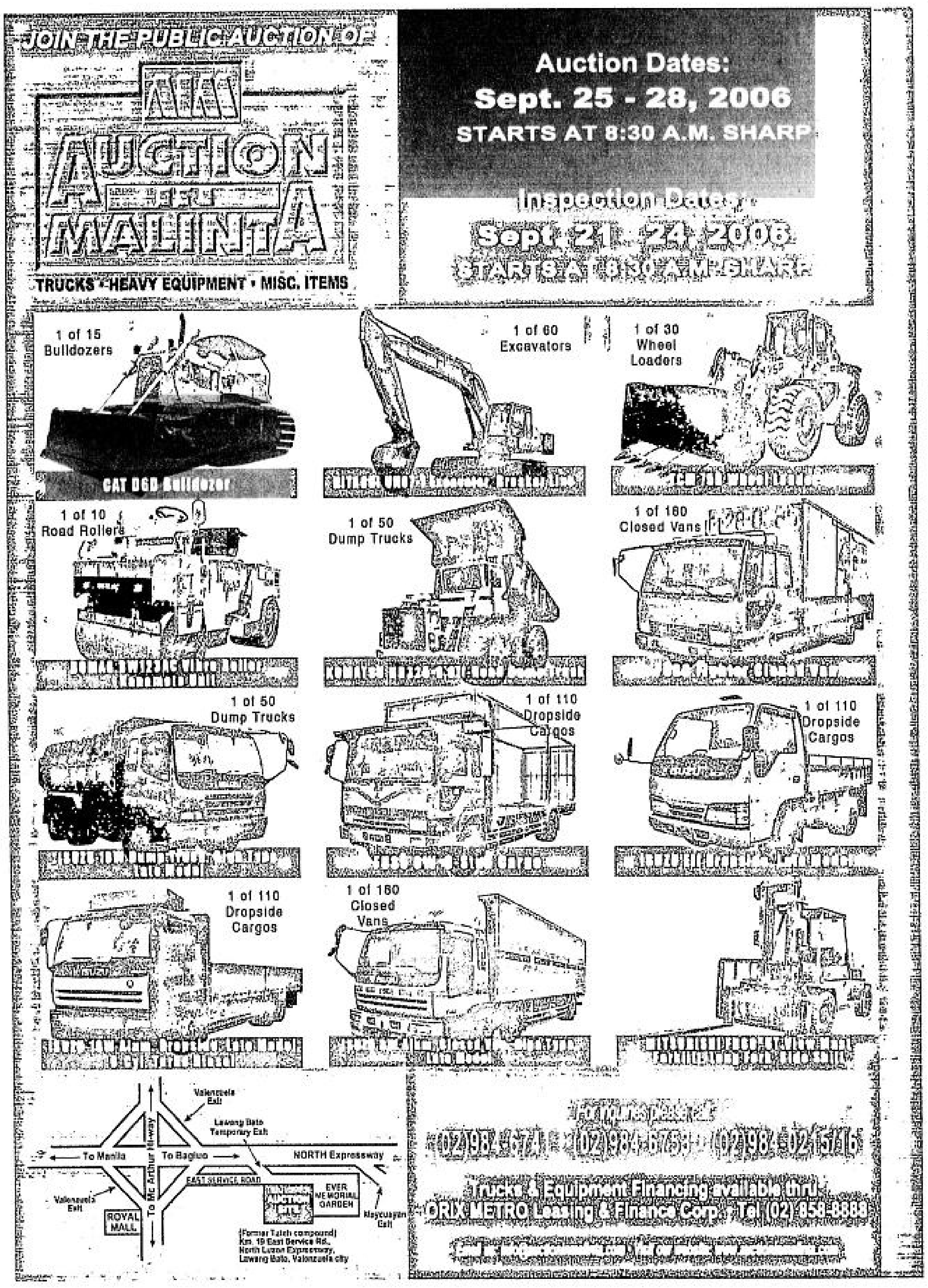
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Meycauayan Exit

Unliquidated advances in gov't hit P17B – Drilon

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE ENTIRE GOVERNMENT HAS UNLIQUIDATED cash advances at a "staggering" amount of P17 billion, Sen. Franklin Drilon disclosed yesterday.

"We find this alarming. Many of the accounts are one, two, three years old," Drilon, chair of the Senate finance committee, said after a hearing on the budget of the Commission on Audit.

Drilon said that as of December 2005, unliquidated cash advances reached P9.3 billion for the national government, P2.6 billion for government-owned and controlled corporations and P5 billion for various local government units.

Drilon said P17 billion could translate to 68,000 classrooms and is much more than the budgets of different departments.

According to the records, Malacañang has failed to liquidate P1.5 billion, including P39.7 million for the Office of the President.

The unliquidated advances of Congress reached P25.3 million, including P19.5 million from the House and P4 million from the Senate. The judiciary has P31.7 million unliquidated advances.

Correction

IN THE SEPT. 9 ISSUE, A BUSINESS STORY on Page B3—"Japan stops shipments of mangoes from RP company" — misstated that Davao-based Diamond Star Agro Products Inc. is a sister company of Dole Philippines.

* * *

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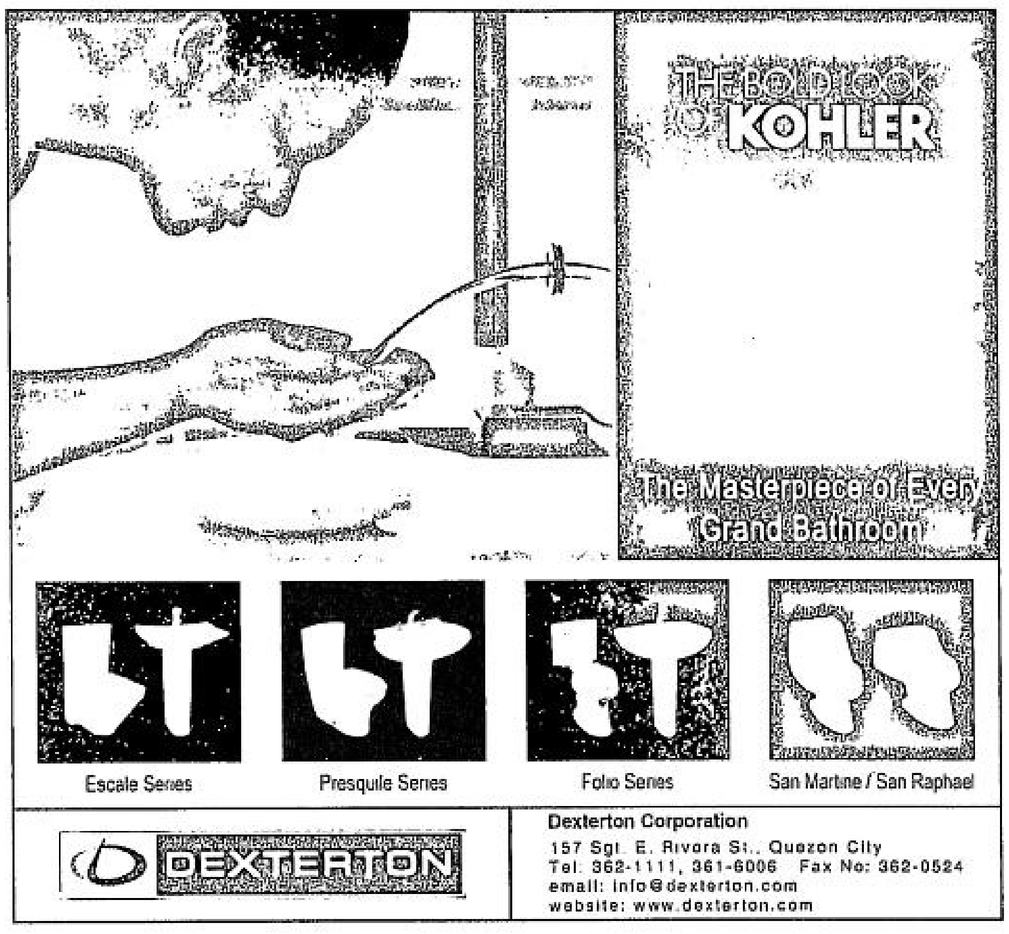
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Nicole's ma set to start another battle

By Volt Contreras

WITH THE LEGAL BATTLE OF "NICOLE" reaching its final stage, her mother appears to be on the verge of another fight.

Nicole's private lawyer, Evalyn Ursua, yesterday said her client's mother would submit an affidavit shortly to the National Bureau of Investigation on the purported disclosure of a public prosecutor that the rape case could be "traded off" with the case of former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante, who is detained in the United States.

In media interviews two weeks ago, the mother said Nicole's lead government counsel, Senior State Prosecutor Emilie Fe de los Santos, had proposed a settlement of the case as early as July. She also said De los Santos had warned of the tradeoff if Nicole passed up the option.

The mother could not elaborate when asked how exactly the two high-profile cases would figure in the purported arrangement.

The supposed Bolante connection also never cropped up again in subsequent media statements made by Nicole against her public prosecutors, four of whom she had asked Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez to replace.

De los Santos has strongly denied the mother's allegations.

Ursua said the NBI, which Gonzalez had ordered to look into the mother's claims, had approached her and "asked if we are filing criminal charges against De los Santos."

"Our response is that we will submit an affidavit and it's up to [the NBI's] evaluation whether charges should be filed," Ursua told the INQUIRER.

Testimonies expected, says 'Nicole' lawyer

From page A1

"Their defense lacked indicators of truthfulness because all they have is the claim that the sex was consensual," Ursua said.

Nicole has accused Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith of raping her in the back seat of a moving van on the night of Nov. 1, 2005, at the Subic Bay Freeport, while his colleagues—Lance Corporals Keith Silkwood and Dominic Duplantis and Staff Sgt. Chad Carpentier—cheered him on. She claimed to have been dead drunk at the time.

All four men testified that Smith and Nicole had consensual sex.

"But they had no other witness who could corroborate [their] claim that Nicole was not drunk, that she walked to the van," Ursua said.

Enough witnesses

According to Silkwood's counsel, Jose Justiniano, however, the defense panel had enough witnesses to quash the rape complaint.

Besides, Justiniano said yesterday, whatever happened before and after the purported rape inside the van would all just be "circumstantial evidence."

"You can only say evidence is self-serving when the other side had no opportunity to cross-examine ... But here, our clients were cross-examined. And if you would note, because there was no evidence against the three (Silkwood, Duplantis and Carpentier), they acted more as witnesses for Smith," Justiniano said.

Apart from the four accused, the defense panel's other witnesses were Nicole's friend, Lance Cpl. Justin Michael Bamberger, who told the court that the complainant had initially denied and later admitted having been raped, and Dr. Teresita Sanchez, an obstetrician-gynecologist who said Nicole had no injuries commonly found in victims of sexual abuse.

The defense panel was to have presented a woman from Subic as its seventh witness, but the latter purportedly backed out as she "didn't want to be in the limelight."

Drunk vs coherent

While Nicole testified that she was dead drunk and thus too weak to have fought Smith off, the latter told the court that she was a willing partner.

Another US Marine said Nicole was coherent during their short ride from the Neptune Club (where she and Smith had met) to the pier (a dash away from where their ship, the USS Essex, was docked).

While prosecution witnesses said Smith had carried Nicole piggyback and then loaded her into the van, all four accused said Nicole stepped into the vehicle of her own volition.

They also countered the testimony of businessman Joseph Khonghun, who said he saw Nicole dumped "like a pig" from the van on the roadside by two Caucasians whom he identified as Smith and Silkwood.

They said Nicole got off the van with Smith's assistance when they stopped at the pier. They also said the area was well-lit, and that there were many people on the sidewalk.

But Ursua said: "The prosecution witnesses didn't even know Nicole, and they were not interested in the case. They may not know what really happened inside the van, but they saw that Nicole was drunk and that she was dumped from the van."

Wounded dolphin dies

From page A1

perhaps caused by ropes used to tie it and pull it out of the Cayanga River in San Fabian.

"Two biologists were observing and assisting [the dolphin] the entire night. We were also getting tips from [personnel of] the Ocean Adventure in Subic for its upkeep," Rosario told the INQUIRER.

He said the dolphin started to breathe heavily at around 5:30 a.m. yesterday. It died before 6 a.m.

Stressed out

Rosario said the dolphin might have been "stressed" when it was taken to the BFAR research center aboard a truck.

"When I was told about [the beached dolphin], I prepared a boat to go to the river where it was tied. We planned to treat it there. But before we could leave, the truck was already at the [BFAR] gate," he said.

The dolphin measured 6.6 feet around its belly and 10.3 feet long. It weighed a ton and was the biggest among the dolphins that had ever beached themselves in the coastal towns and cities of Pangasinan.

Cemetery for endangered species

The dolphin will be buried in the cemetery for endangered species at the BFAR research center where it will join the remains of 14 sea creatures, mostly dolphins.

Thirteen of the creatures buried in the cemetery beached in the Lingayen Gulf. One came from Bulacan.

Rosario said because of the dolphin's death, the BFAR would train its personnel and local officials on how to handle endangered sea creatures that beach along the coastal areas of the province.

Personnel from Ocean Adventure, a marine park at the Subic Bay Freeport in Zambales, will hold the training during Fishery Conservation Week on Oct. 15-21.

WESTLY ROSARIO, BFAR research center chief in Dagupan City, looks at the remains of the dolphin in a tank that had been drained of sea water. RAY B. ZAMBRANO/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Relax

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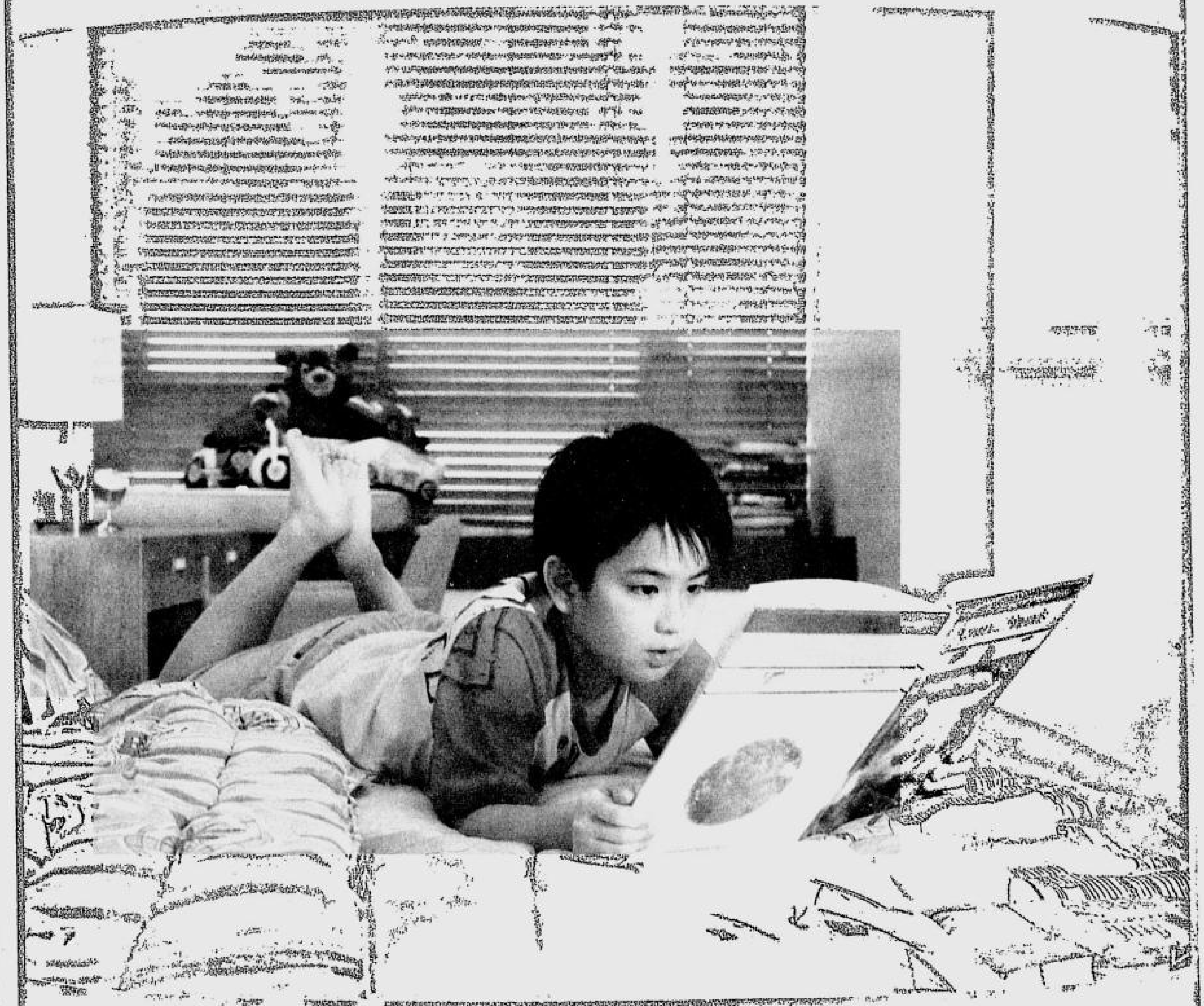

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3rd Annual P. A. C. C. D. Convention

Dermatology PRACTICE in the Philippines: Past Present Future

SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 1, 2006 CROWNE PLAZA GALLERIA MANILA, ORTIGAS AVENUE, QUEZON CITY

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Mabuhay!

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President,Republic of the
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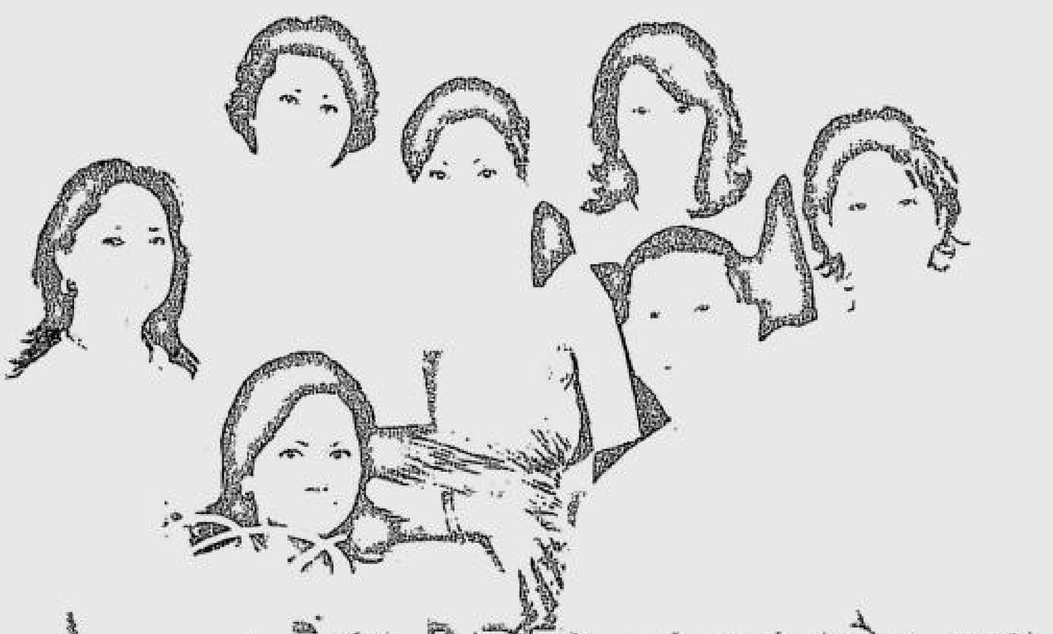

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RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

Travels, cars give Customs exec away

By Norman Bordadora

AN APPARENT PENchant for travel and late-model cars may prove to be the undoing of the chief customs officer at the Manila International Container Port.

Agents of the Department of Finance-Revenue Integrity Protection Service yesterday filed a complaint for multiple violations of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act against Athena Dans after she was found to have allegedly amassed wealth—including nine cars and a resort in Quezon province—despite her small salary as a customs official.

In its complaint filed with the Ombudsman yesterday, the DOF-RIPS said that from having a net worth of only P261,000 when she joined the Bureau of Customs in 1990, Dans had allegedly accumulated wealth "in the aggregate amount of P20 million, more or less."

Buying spree

The "vehicle-buying spree" began in 1994 when Dans and her husband, Alvin, bought a Mitsubishi Lancer worth P550,000 despite her annual salary being only P66,408, or P5,534 a month, before taxes.

"The incongruity of the situation is made even more apparent, considering that she and her husband—supposedly a practicing lawyer in Basilan with no stated regular income—had at that time no less than three school-aged children to clothe, feed, educate and support," the DOF-RIPS said.

Through the years, the Danses were able to buy a Mitsubishi Adventure (in 1998), a Hyundai Starex van (1999), an Isuzu Crosswind AUV (2001), a Nissan Frontier pickup (2002) and a Toyota Innova van this year.

Alvin Dans also acquired an Isuzu Highlander AUV, a Suzuki Super Carry van and a Honda motorcycle.

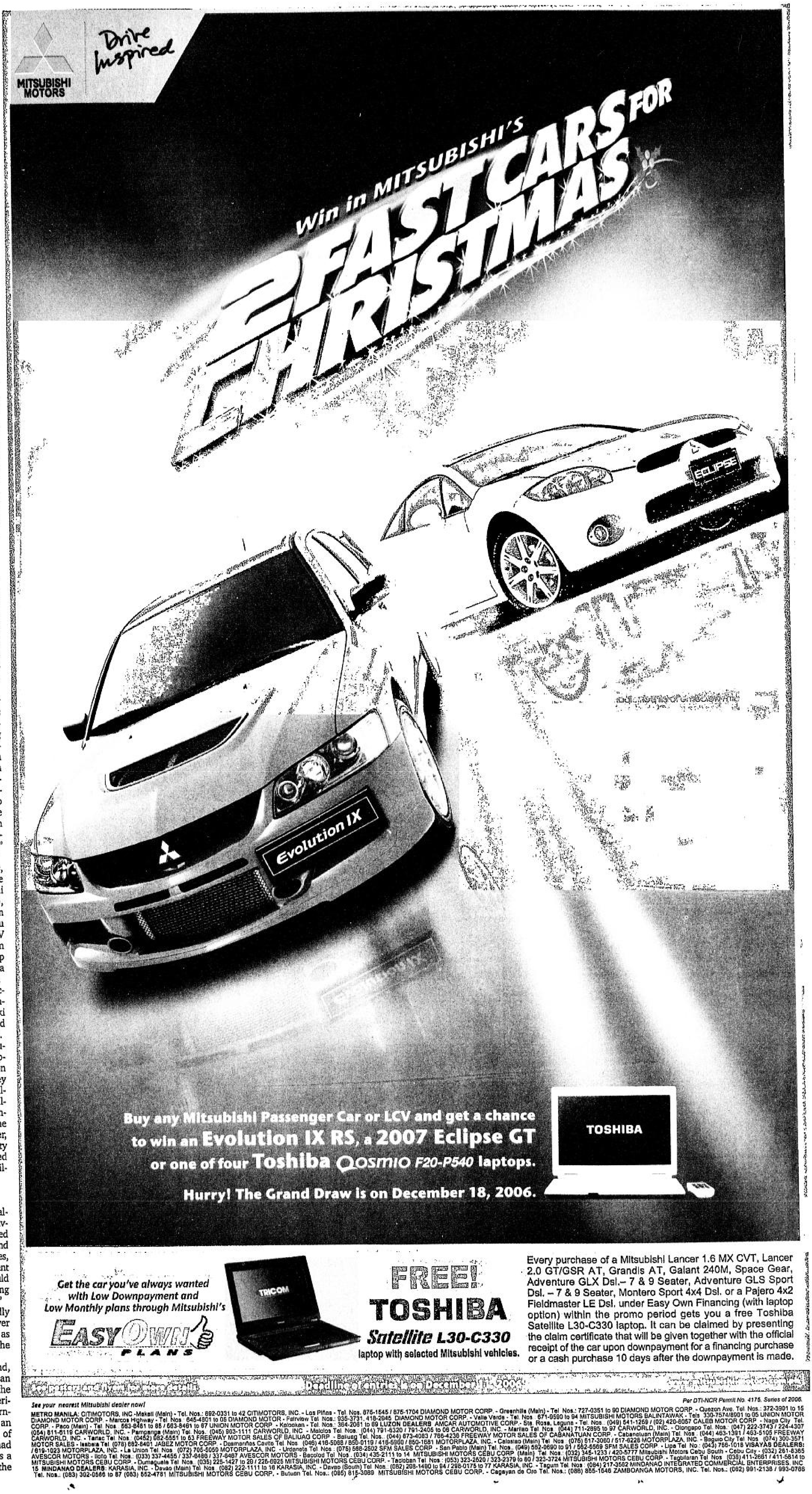
In 2003, the couple acquired a property in Quezon province that they declared as agricultural land with a value of P138,000. Investigation by the DOF-RIPS, however, revealed the property was a well-appointed resort worth P15 million.

Travels

The couple were also found to have traveled to the United States, Japan and France many times, "which respondent and her husband could ill-afford considering their limited means."

Dans reportedly makes just over P249,000 a year as customs chief at the Manila port.

Her husband, Alvin, who was an undersecretary at the Department of Interior and Local Government in 1996 with an annual salary of P400,000, now had no fixed income as a "farmer-lawyer," the DOF-RIPS said.



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Deadline of entries is on December 11, 2006.

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Southeast Asian College Inc.

Messages

Office of the President of the Philippines
Malacañang

Warmest felicitations to the administration, teachers, and students of the Southeast Asian College, Inc. as you celebrate your 9th Foundation Anniversary.

Good education is one of the foundations of a robust Republic because it provides our people with better opportunities for growth and employment. I laud the Southeast Asian College for being a constant partner in nation building and for its contribution to the strengthening of the Philippine education system.

Your nine glorious years have shown your unwavering commitment to provide relevant, comprehensive and quality education to your students as you mold their character in preparation for a better future. For this, you should be commended.

With our combined efforts, we can achieve our 10-point legacy agenda on socio-economic and political reforms. Together, let us beat the odds.

Happy anniversary and Mabuhay!

Gloria Macapagal Arroyo
President, Republic of the Philippines

Republic of the Philippines
Quezon City
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Quezon City lays claim to being the center of education in our country. It is the home of most of the country's well-known and prestigious educational institutions.

Southeast Asian College is a modest yet highly respected school for its excellent facilities and integrated curriculum for quality education. It is noted for producing well-rounded professional deeply immersed in spiritual and moral values.

We join the administrators, faculty and students of Southeast Asian College in celebrating its 9th founding anniversary. We hope this institution will continue to impart quality education to our young people.

The high degree of professional excellence and scholarship of the graduates of Quezon City's educational institutions will be our country's competitive edge in an increasingly competitive world.

Feliciano Belmonte
City Mayor

My warmest greeting to the men and women behind the continued success of Southeast Asian College, Inc. in honor of our Nine Founding Anniversary!

Like the turbulent times that our beleaguered nation has overcome, we too, have seen the fruits of our united efforts in upholding our vision of producing service-oriented members for a global community and services over the years. We have learned and grown better. From our first wobbly steps we have now become more competent and confident in the pursuance of our endeavors.

Again, I wish all of us, a brighter future ahead as we work in unity and commitment every day.

God Bless us All.

Peter Laurel
Chairman, SACI

Our occasion of 9th Founding Anniversary of Southeast Asian College, Inc. we reaffirm our commitment to provide the best possible education to our students. We remain committed to stable ground that will allow the student to gain knowledge and to develop the skills needed for the expectedly different world of this new century.

Delfin A. Tan
President, SACI

Today, we celebrate nine years of service & commitment to the education of future allied medical and business professionals who will be continuously providing globally competitive skills and impassioned dedication to their fellowmen.

To further this avowment, I urge our dear faculty to join me profess more of ourselves, holistically to the future generations as we mold our students to be able-bodied & knowledgeable individuals every single day they spend under our mentorship.

To the studentry, let us continue to glorify the name of our beloved institution by continually reaping laurels in your respective areas of learning, as you are touted to be the keepers of the future.

With the administrative officials and staff, we will be able to fulfill these goals as long as we remain unified & supportive of each other.

To all of us, congratulations on our Founding Anniversary.

Edita F. Enatsu
EVP / Treasurer

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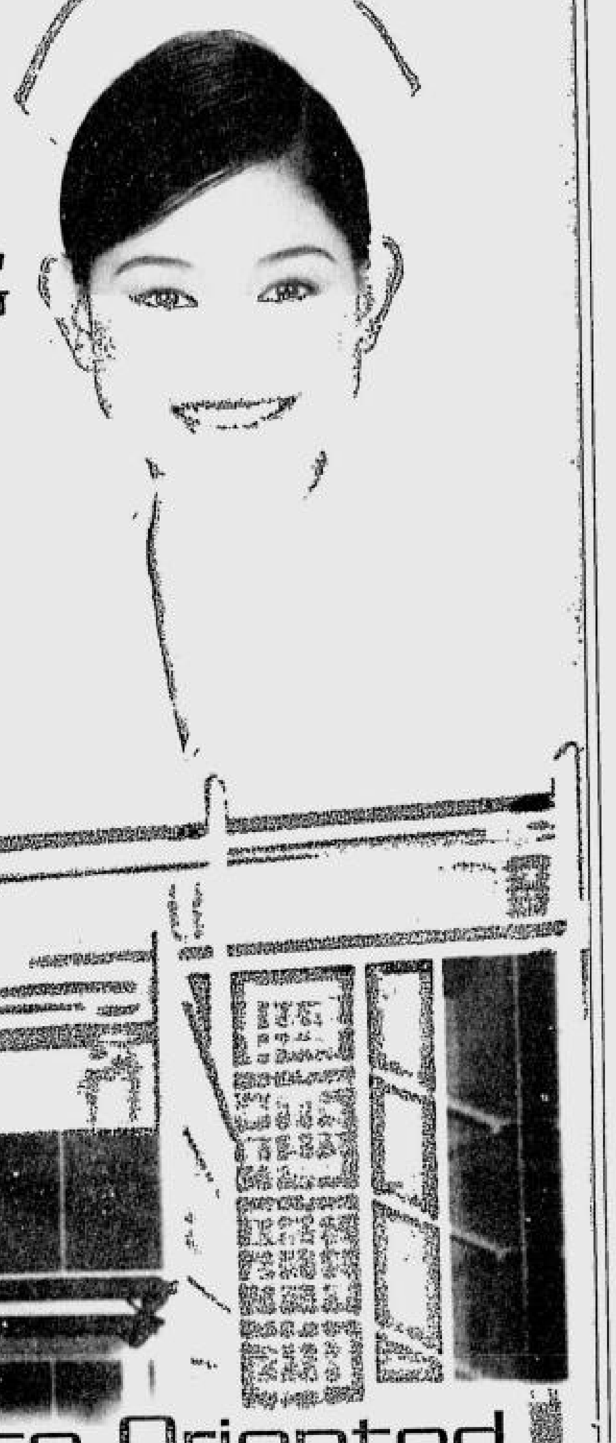

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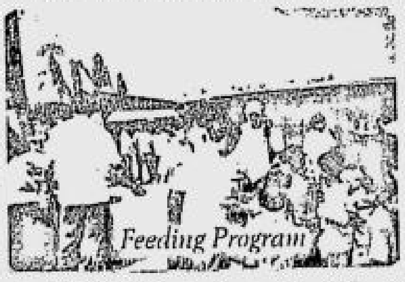

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Thai junta to stay ...

From page A1

"It's necessary to keep the council so that there is no loophole for the executive branch," Sondhi told Agence France Presse in a telephone interview.

"Both the interim prime minister and the interim constitution will be ready in a day or two. Everything will proceed according to the original schedule," he added.

Sondhi said a draft interim constitution had been written and would be submitted for endorsement to Thailand's king by Sunday. He hinted that the ruling military council might replace the ousted Thaksin with an ex-military man.

Sondhi said the council was still narrowing down its candidates for the job of prime minister.

"When you say 'civilian prime minister,' you will see that soldiers after they retire can be called civilians," Sondhi said during a nationally televised press conference.

Sondhi led the coup that ousted Thaksin on Sept. 19 and said at the time that a civilian leader would be installed within two weeks—or by Oct. 4.

Temporary constitution

Under the temporary constitution, the ruling council will be "transformed" into a panel of security ministers, called the National Security Council, to "advise" the government on security matters, Sondhi said.

"We do not know what the internal situation will be in the future," Sondhi said. "As of today, the situation is calm, orderly and peaceful, but we do not know what is going to happen in the future."

The military council had said it wanted a constitution with fewer "loopholes" that would make future leaders more accountable.

Probe of Thaksin

Sondhi said the new prime minister would have a free hand to choose ministers for a 35-member Cabinet.

Since taking power, the military council has established several anticorruption panels to investigate accusations of wrongdoing against the Thaksin government.

The military has cited official corruption as one of the reasons for the coup, staged while Thaksin was attending the annual UN General Assembly meetings in New York.

The top graft-fighting panel on Monday said it might freeze the assets of Thaksin and his top aides if evidence was found that they tried to transfer their wealth abroad. Thaksin is currently in London.

Won't be home soon

Sondhi said he did not expect Thaksin to return home anytime soon.

"I think he is aware of the situation," Sondhi said. "I do not think he will return in the near future."

Thaksin's family is one of the wealthiest in Southeast Asia—and was even before he became prime minister in 2001.

The ousted leader is a former telecoms tycoon whose wealth was estimated at more than $2 billion by Forbes magazine this year.

The military council has also promised to hold elections by October next year after a new constitution is enacted to replace the one scrapped when it ousted Thaksin.

History of promises

Speaking later to reporters, Sondhi said the military could have places in the new Cabinet but that the generals would not interfere.

"We will not control the Cabinet, we will just give them our expertise. I reaffirm that the junta will not be involved in politics," he said.

However, promises from Sondhi to restore democracy within a year sounded like a rerun of a military putsch in 1991, analysts said.

"If previous coups are anything to go by, the question is not whether it's going to go wrong, but when it will go wrong—and how badly," said Duncan McCargo, professor of Southeast Asian Politics at Britain's Leeds University.

After the 1991 coup, Thailand's 17th since the 1930s, the Army appointed a civilian prime minister in a week and promised elections within six months—but actually held them in 13.

No master plan

This time, the military rulers have promised elections under a new constitution in 12 months, leading to suggestions they simply dusted off the 1991 "road map to democracy" and gave it a slightly inflated timeline.

"It does seem the coup group were not completely prepared for what they would do next. They don't have a master plan," McCargo told a seminar in Singapore. "You have to take the events of 1991 as a basic template."

Worryingly for Thais and investors, a general was appointed prime minister in 1992 after an inconclusive election result, leading to mass protests and days of clashes between demonstrators and soldiers in which scores of people were killed.

Possible PM?

Sondhi told AFP it was "75 percent confirmed which person will become the new prime minister," adding that he met on Monday with the top adviser to Thailand's revered King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

Thailand's media have tipped former World Trade Organization boss Supachai Panitchpakdi as the military's preferred choice for premier, with the Nation newspaper reporting he had tentatively agreed to take the job.

Since taking power, the generals have banned public gatherings, dismissed parliament, the Cabinet and the highest courts, assumed legislative powers and slapped curbs on the media.

Sondhi reiterated that Thaksin would be allowed to return but warned he could face prosecution.

Thaksin had been accused of abusing his office by placing relatives in key positions and overseeing massive electoral fraud to stay in power. He was also facing public anger over alleged widespread corruption.

Among the cases being studied are the sale of bomb scanners for Bangkok's new $3-billion Suvarnabhumi airport, which is due to open on Thursday, an airport train link and the suspected misuse of lottery revenues and tsunami aid.

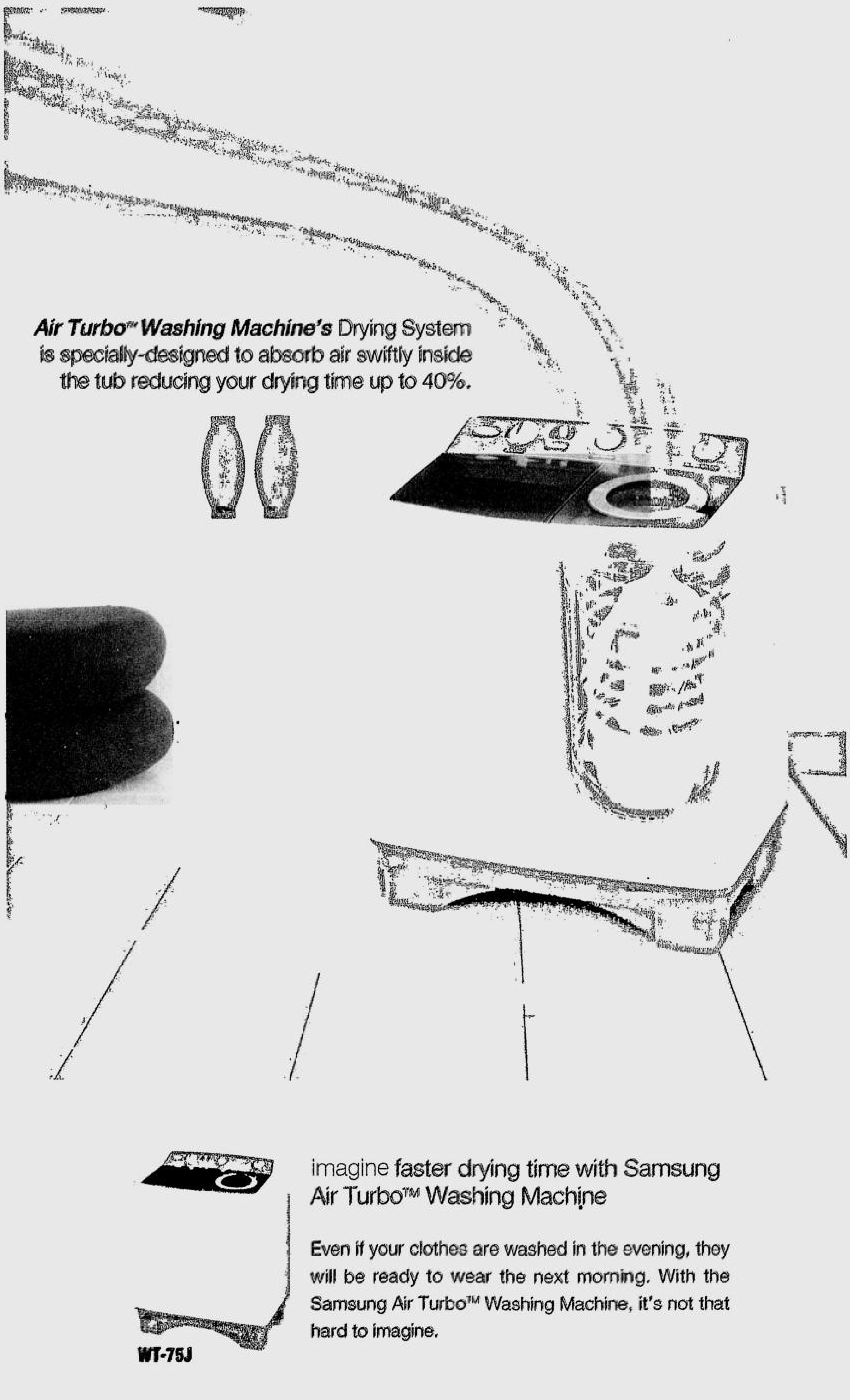
A U-turn

Another key focus will be Thaksin's tax-free January sale of his family's telecom empire to a Singapore state company for $1.9 billion.

In Washington, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called the putsch "a U-turn" and urged its leaders to restore democracy "very, very quickly."

"The biggest problem is that in a Southeast Asia that was pretty stable ... it's a U-turn," Rice told The Wall Street Journal in an interview, but added that she did not see it affecting the rest of the region. *Reports from AFP, AP and Reuters*

THAI soldiers, with their guns on a table, keep watch at the Royal Plaza in central Bankok on Tuesday. AP



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PCGG asks SC to cite Pimentel for contempt

By Alcuin Papa

AFTER WEEKS OF BEING ON THE RUN from pursuing Senate law enforcers, the commissioners of the Presidential Commission on Good Government are considering filing contempt charges against opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel for commenting on the controversies rocking the Philippine Communications Satellite Corp. (Philcomsat) despite a gag order from the Supreme Court.

Ricardo Abcede, the PCGG commissioner for assets management, said they have in their sights Pimentel, Malaya publisher Amado "Jake" Macasaet and some media outlets that he did not name.

Abcede said it was "unfair" that others are honoring the SC gag order but "other individuals are contemptuously violating" it.

He said the commissioners, through the Office of the Solicitor General, could file before the SC a "manifestation and motion to cite in contempt" against Pimentel and the others.

Last Sept. 12, the Senate ordered the arrest of PCGG chair Camilo Sabio, and commissioners Abcede, Nicasio Conti, Tereso Javier and Narciso Nario for refusing to appear before a Senate investigation into the alleged dissipation of the assets of Philcomsat, a crony concern under sequestration by the PCGG.

The commissioners invoked Executive Order No.1 which states that no member of the commission may appear before any legislative inquiry on matters within his "cognizance."

The Senate arresting team caught up with Sabio at his office and the PCGG chief spent 10 days in detention at the offices of the Senate sergeant at arms. Abcede and the other PCGG commissioners went into hiding to avoid arrest.

Abcede said Pimentel had issued a media statement on the Philcomsat issue which appeared in at least three newspapers.

He said Macasaet also commented on the issue in his "Business Circuit" column.

Abcede said the unnamed media outlets which commented on the Philcomsat issue "know who they are."

"The SC resolution enjoins all parties from discussing with media or any public forum on any merits of the case," he said.

He pointed out that it was Sen. Joker Arroyo who requested the media gag during oral arguments on the Senate's arrest order against them before the SC.

Arroyo said the PCGG "had a lot of talkative people," an apparent reference to Abcede who was interviewed on the issue.

Last Monday, Sen. Franklin Drilon said the SC could not bar senators from commenting on the Philcomsat case and on the validity of the arrest warrants against the PCGG officials.

Defense asec dismissed over vacation pay

PRESIDENT MACApagal-Arroyo has sacked an assistant secretary at the Department of National Defense upon the recommendation of Presidential Anti-Graft Commission chair Constancia de Guzman who, ironically enough, recommended the official for the job in 2003.

"I think this is one of the most painful tasks I've had to do as PAGC chair," De Guzman told reporters yesterday when she announced the Sept. 22 decision of the Office of the President to dismiss Assistant Secretary Ricardo San Andres.

The PAGC found San Andres to have collected salaries and other allowances for a period last year when he was supposed to be on leave without pay.

At a Malacañang press briefing, De Guzman said the commission investigated San Andres based on a complaint from an anonymous source.

She said San Andres had signed a memorandum of agreement with the European Commission in April last year to assist in the implementation of a project. Thus, he was an employee of the EU from July 16 to Oct. 31 and should have gone on leave without pay from the DND, among others, during that period.

However, the PAGC check showed he collected his salaries, representation and transportation allowance and extraordinary miscellaneous expenses.

Christine O. Avendaño

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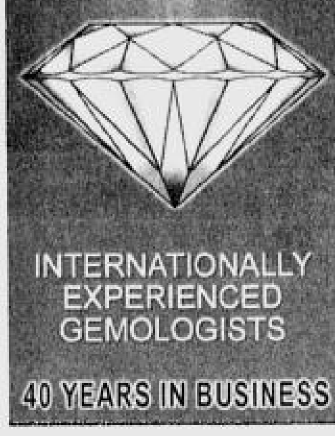

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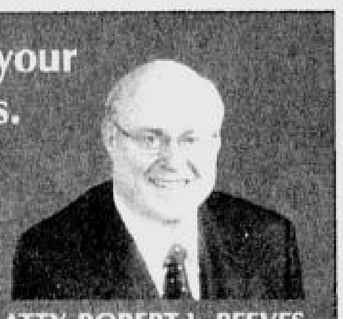

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What's in a name? A lot, says Andaya

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

BUDGET SECRETARY Rolando Andaya is not running for the Senate next year because a pedestrian name like his doesn't stand a chance against illustrious names such as Roxas, Legarda, Recto, Magsaysay and Osmeña who all have highways named after them.

"They say if you run for the Senate, you have to belong to an old and large family. It's important that your name is mentioned regularly in traffic reports—'Recto is moderate, Legarda is green and go, Magsaysay is heavy, Roxas is bumper-to-bumper while Osmeña is light-to-moderate,'" Andaya said in a radio interview.

He denied news reports that he would be on the administration's senatorial slate in the May 2007 polls.

"Mike Defensor (the source of the news) quickly made a disclaimer: 'Nonoy Andaya doesn't want to run for the Senate.' Running never entered my mind—not even in my dreams," Andaya said.

He added that he would invoke his right not to be drafted in the senatorial elections. "There are many in the administration who have better chances of making it than me. [They have] the resources for a national campaign."

However, he refused to say who among the President's Cabinet members were interested in running for the Senate. "It's tough to mention names. You'd be putting me in hot water. People might accuse me of doing a Mike Defensor—of being a one-man party convention," said Andaya, a three-term congressman before he joined the Arroyo administration in February this year.

He said he was strictly a member of Arroyo's team of economic managers and that he was not privy to political matters.

"It is incompatible for a budget secretary, for a disburser of funds, to even entertain the thought of running for a Senate seat. The [budget secretary] position is so sensitive, the slightest perception that he wants to gun for a higher office will give rise to unfair insinuations that he's using his position as a stepping stone," he said.

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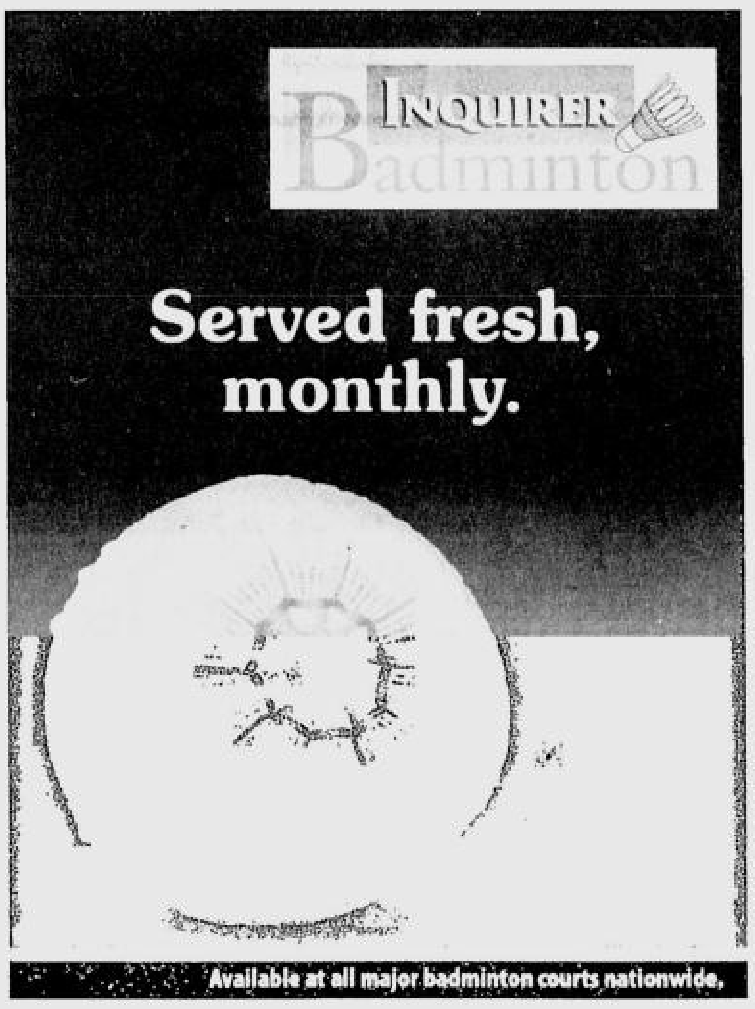

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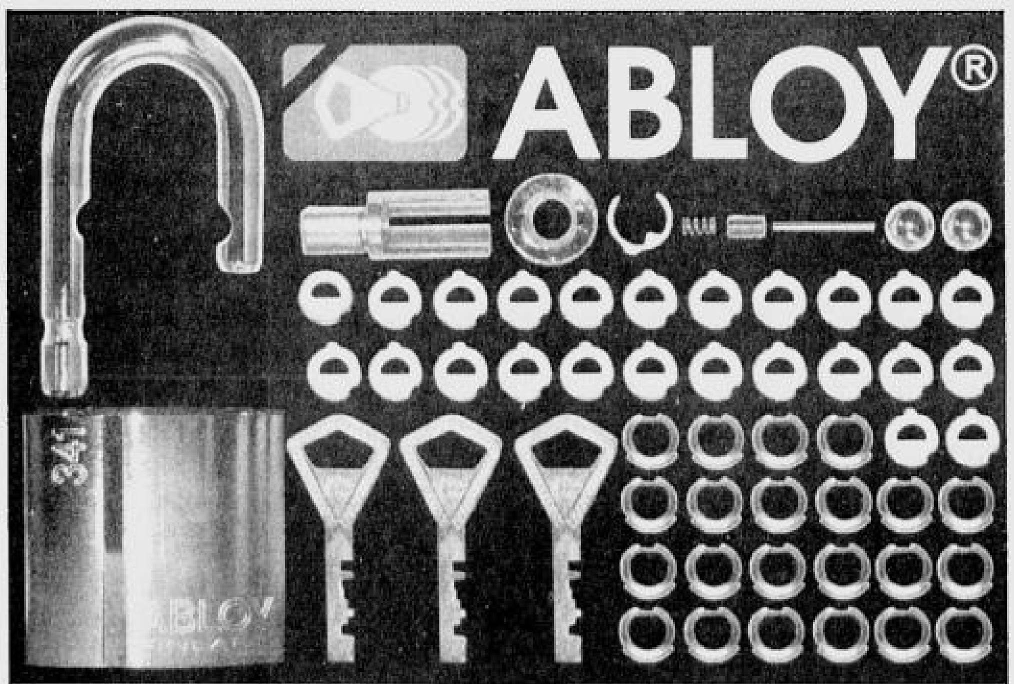

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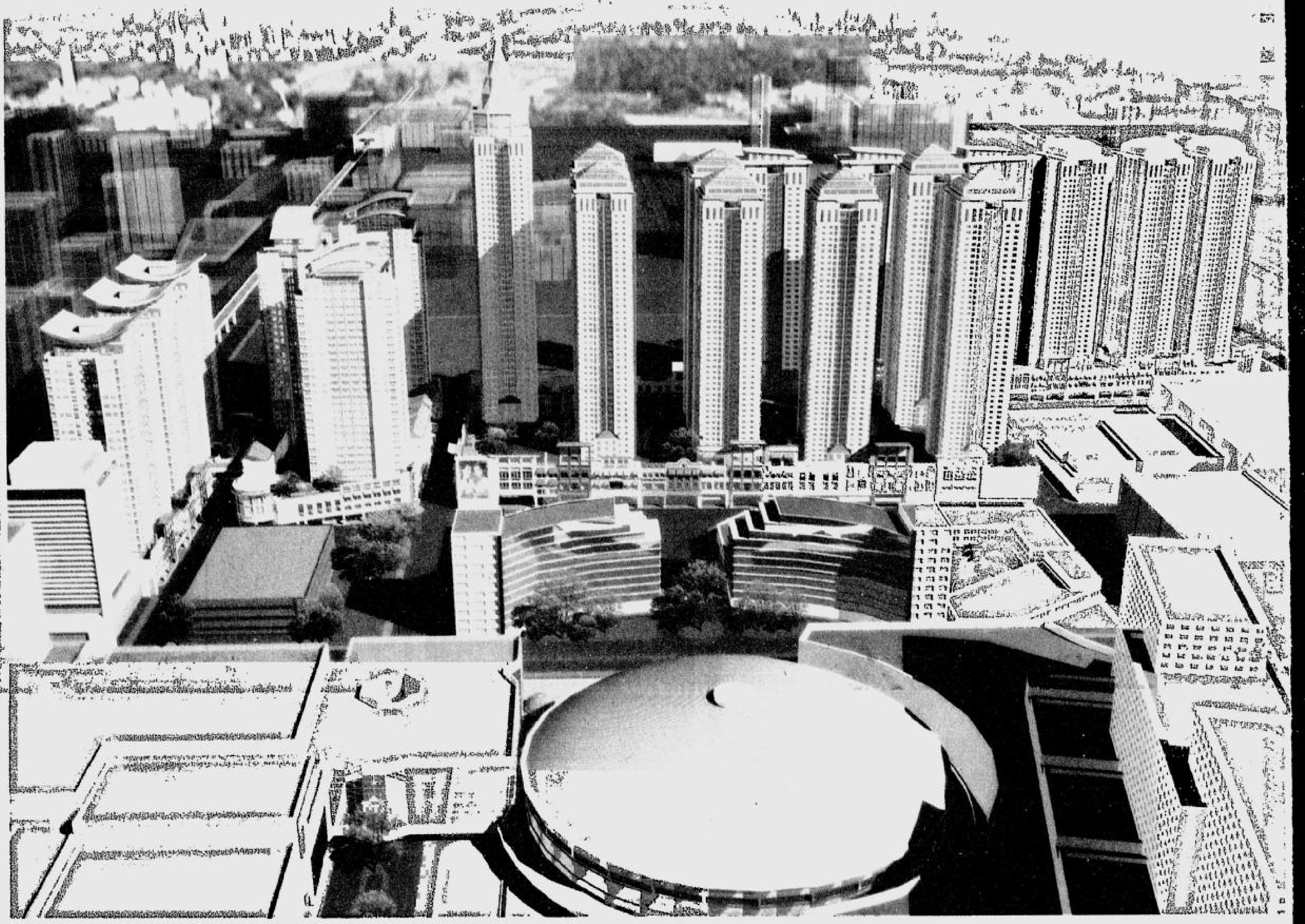

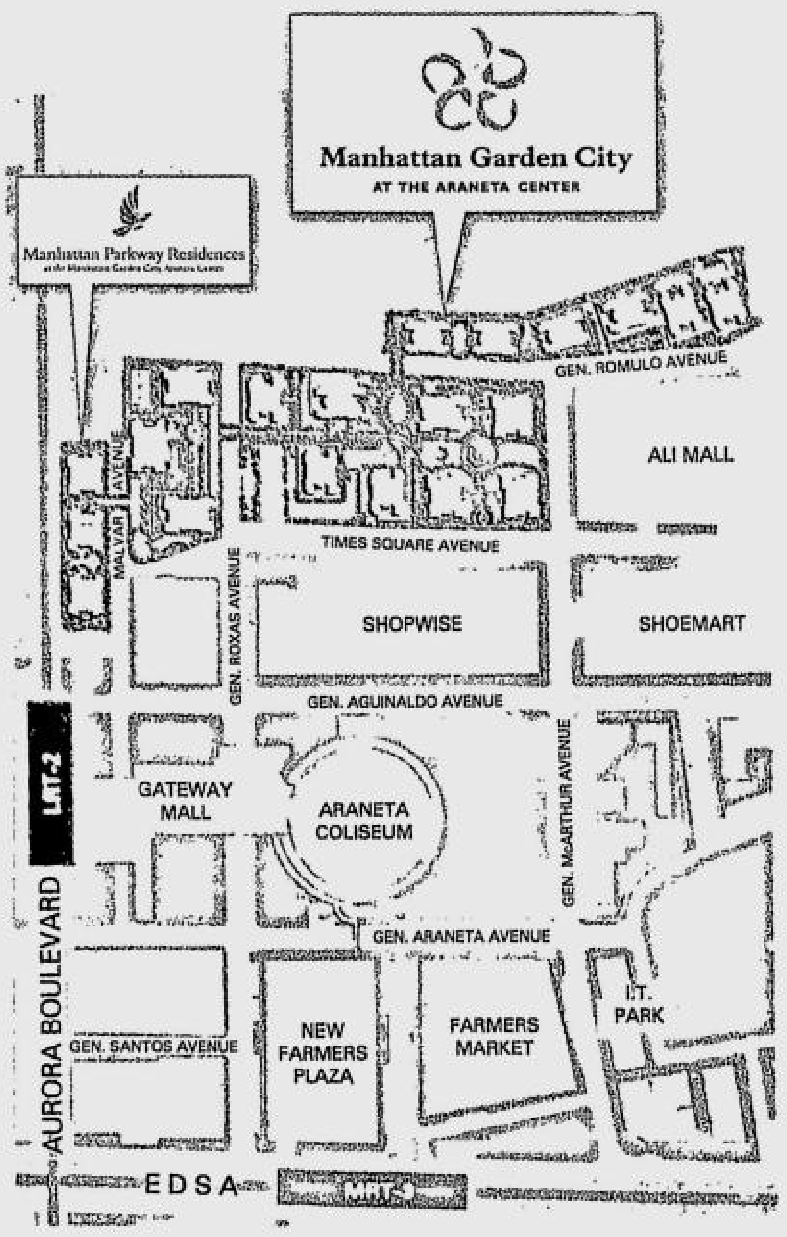
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The Manhattan Garden City is your key to a *better*, *more fun* way to live in Metro Manila. It's the country's first transit-oriented development, linking all of its 19 residential condominium towers to the metro's fast, traffic-free train systems. And to the shops, offices, restaurants and entertainment centers at the Araneta Center. So you can *live, shop, play* and *move* like never before.

Manhattan Garden City: Connecting You to a Cutting-edge Lifestyle.

The Araneta Center in Cubao is the crossroads of Metro Manila. And the meeting point of not one but two train systems: the LRT2 along Aurora Boulevard and MRT3 along EDSA. Manhattan Garden City is the first and only residential project to be connected to both lines. So you're just a stroll away from a quick and hassle-free ride to virtually all major destinations from north to south and east to west of Metro Manila.

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AT THE ARANETA CENTER

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The LRT2 joins the metro's east and west sides, from Santolan in Pasig to Recto Avenue in Manila. The MRT3 runs from North Avenue to Taft Avenue along EDSA. Both lines connect with the LRT1, which travels from Monumento in Caloocan to Baclaran in Paranaque. The LRT1 links up with the MRT3 at Taft Avenue in Pasay and the LRT2 at Doroteo Jose in Manila.

Get around the Metro the Fast and Easy Way.

With the LRT/MRT trains close by, you and your family have the power to go places.

The LRT2 takes your children to Ateneo or UP in Quezon City in just 8 minutes. Or to Manila's university belt in 19 minutes. Your wife is only 29 minutes away from Divisoria's bargain stores. Through the MRT3, get to your office in Ortigas in 6 minutes, Ayala Avenue in 17 minutes or Taft Avenue in 22 minutes. And since both lines link up with the LRT1, you can reach many more places in the metro than ever before.

All this means you spend less time on the road—and more time relaxing at home. More time to enjoy with family and friends. More time for leisure and exercise. More time for fun.

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From your home in Manhattan Garden City—and for the first time in the country—going to the train stations is as refreshing as a walk in the park.

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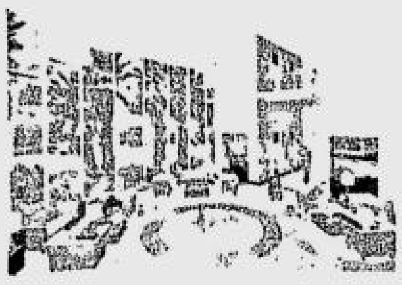
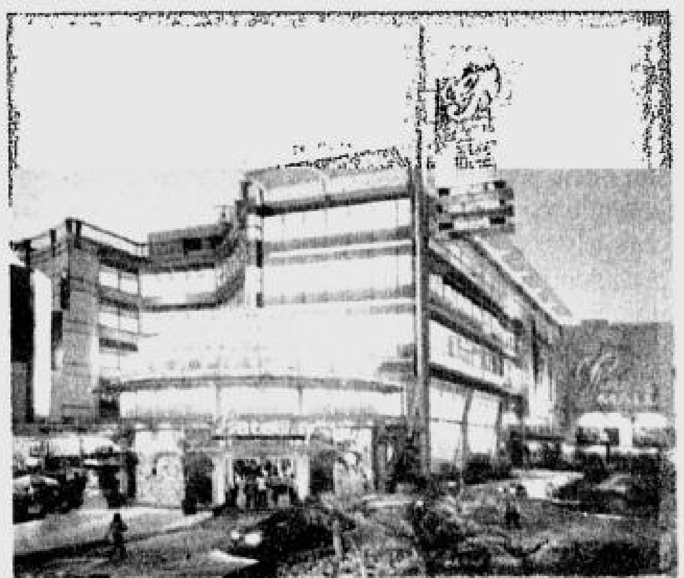
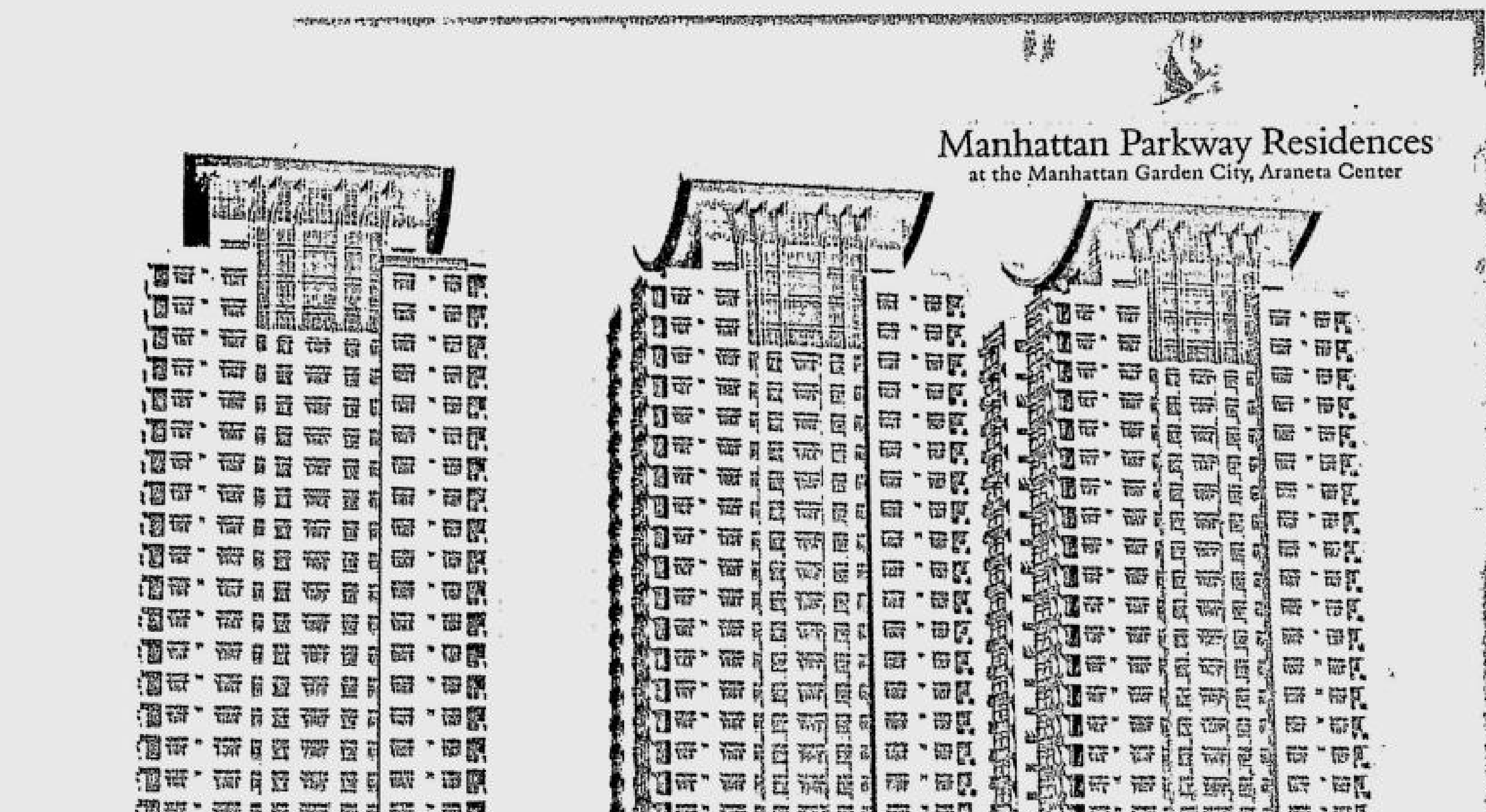
Your Gateway to the Araneta Center.



Manhattan Garden City is part of an even larger home that is the Araneta Center. Your entryway: a four-level transfer station featuring a hotel-style lobby, a grand staircase and four passenger elevators. The transfer station connects you to the retail row at the ground floor. The parking area at the basement, second and third levels. And the garden walkway at the fourth level. What's more, an elevated landscaped footbridge connects your home at the third level to the Araneta Center. And to a myriad of dining, shopping and entertainment options. Topping the list is the Araneta Coliseum, home of the country's biggest sporting and entertainment events. Other draws include the trendy Gateway Mall, famous for The Oasis, a unique interior floating garden. And shopping hubs like Rustan's, SM-Cubao, Shopwise, Ali Mall and Farmers Plaza.




Manhattan Parkway Residences
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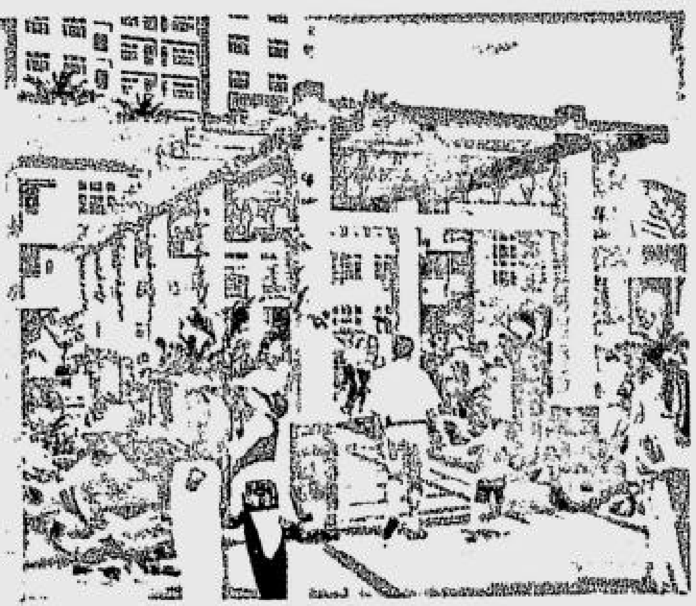

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Reservations are now accepted for the first phase of Manhattan Garden City: Manhattan Parkway. Its three towers host spacious executive studios and relaxing one-bedroom suites. The units look out on the Araneta Center and Manila Bay, making you feel on top of the world. Arrayed at the fourth level garden deck are leisure amenities including trellised walkways and jogging trails, a fitness station, an indoor sauna/spa and a gym. What's more, footbridges will connect you to a lot more play amenities at the upcoming phases. So you can enjoy hours and hours of fun right at home.

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Property merry-go-round

EDITORIAL

AFTER 15 YEARS, THE ISSUE HAS FINALLY BEEN settled. The Supreme Court has decided against the families of soldiers claiming ownership over 39.9 hectares of land in Fort Bonifacio. According to the Court, which overturned decisions by inferior courts, the land is part of a military reservation and cannot be purchased by private corporations or individuals. The decision is the fruit of a petition filed by the government seeking the nullification of a ruling by the Court of Appeals which affirmed the dismissal by the Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch 71 of the government's complaint.

The 24-page decision penned by Associate Justice Cancio Garcia also instructed the Southside Homeowners Association Inc. (SHAI) which had claimed it rightfully purchased the land, to vacate the property that is part of the Fort Andres Bonifacio Military Reservation. This order will have to be eventually enforced by the Armed Forces, which previously received public criticism, as well as triggered grumbling within the ranks, over its previous efforts to evict retired officers and their families from Fort Bonifacio properties.

While the country should be relieved that what was apparently quite a bold scam, involving, as it did, a fictitious presidential proclamation and financial terms manifestly unfair to the government, settling the question of who owns the 39.9 hectares gives rise to even more questions.

The Department of National Defense has stated its desire to unload government properties beginning with Camp Aguinaldo (though there is a counter-assertion that the property was donated either by the Madrigals or the Ortigases for military use, which, if discontinued, would revert the property to the donors). To be sure, there are many good reasons to support the removal of the AFP headquarters to an area outside Metro Manila. The metropolis has grown far beyond the confines or even arrangements envisioned when Camps Crame and Aguinaldo were built in the late 1930s. Past coup attempts have also shown that the facilities present a danger to civilians living in their environs.

But moving them is only the opening salvo in the cannibalization of state resources that began with the sale of most of Fort Bonifacio during the Ramos era. And settling cases such as the one contesting the officer-occupied properties in Fort Bonifacio, is a prelude, not to their reuse by active officers, but to their sale to gain the government a profit but permanently put the land in private hands and for private gain.

Since the Edsa Revolution in 1986, the grandiose and impractical urban planning of the Marcos years was abandoned in favor of an ad hoc, even more short-sighted management of government properties. From the 1930s to the 1980s, there were periodic revisions of a national capitol plan. Since the Aquino years, the country has had no capitol plan, only capitol proposals, while the earlier plans were simply junked. Part of a national capitol plan is a rational scheme for the housing of government employees. Such plans are small-time, small-scale and puny in comparison to the large number of state employees who deserve dignified access to modest but practical homes.

The result is not only government workers living as squatters—from policemen to the clerks that keep the bureaucracy staffed—but being treated as such, even if, perhaps, they have invested their modest life savings in what they were assured were properties rightfully theirs. We do not mean generals grown fat from corruption; we mean other officers and their families. We mean, as well, civilian employees who don't even have the remnants of a plan for staff housing.

The military has its own troubles, caused by top brass overstaying in staff housing, while the rank and file keep squatting on. The situation for civilian employees is even more dire. And all government workers must contend with being overworked, underpaid—and then the target of what even the Supreme Court, in the case of the defeated homeowners in Fort Bonifacio, called a premature effort at eviction. It's time for a plan, rational, transparent, and, most of all, fair, for the housing of state employees. The sale of Fort Bonifacio resulted in the alienation of government land for private gain. We cannot afford to maintain such a lopsided policy toward government lands.

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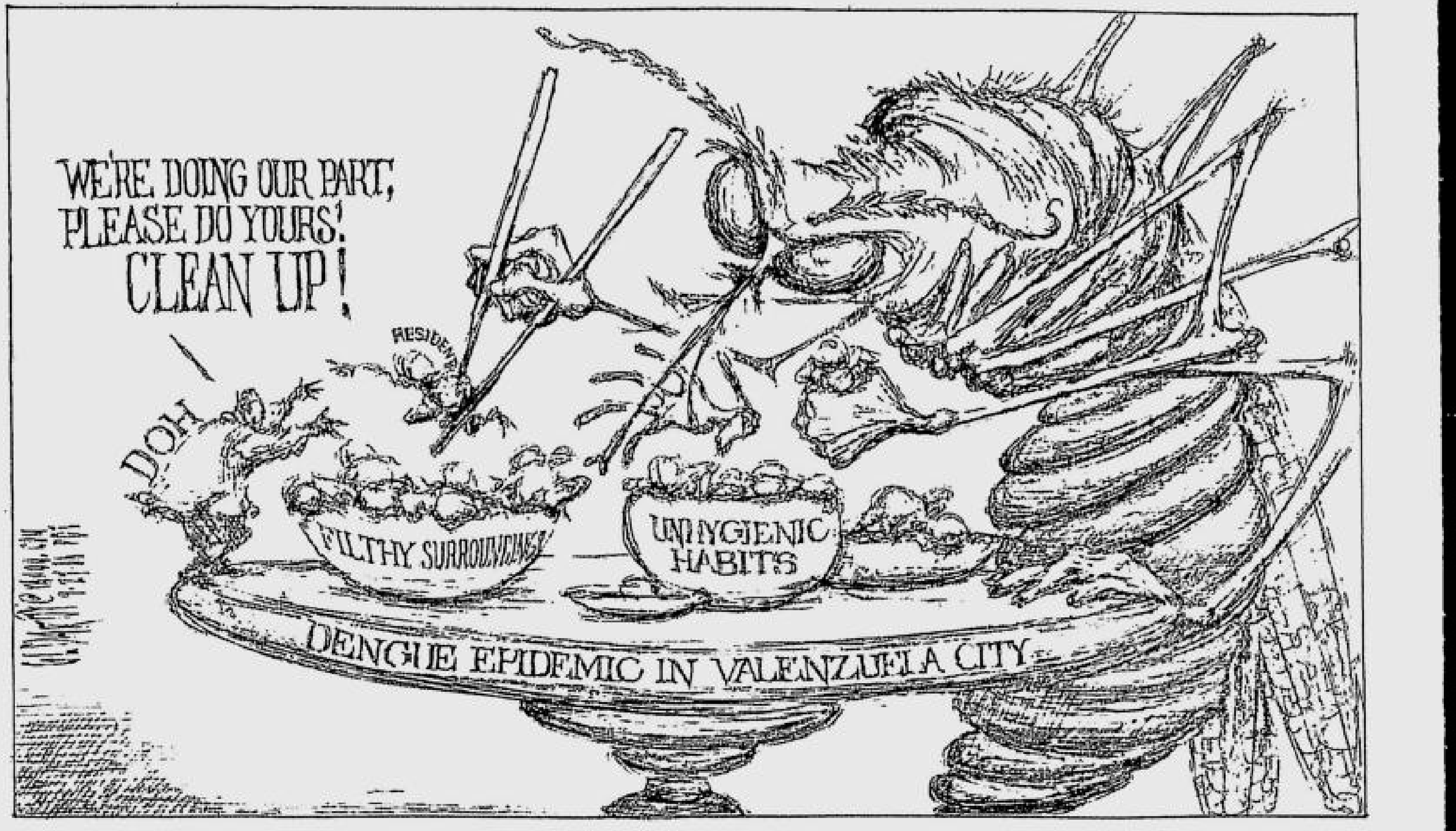
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Contradictions in pro-Cha-cha tactics

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

IN ITS DESPERATE EFFORTS TO PUSH CHARter change, the administration is entangling itself in contradictions. This early, President Macapagal-Arroyo and her lackeys are already eyeing the administration's senatorial candidates in next year's elections. But the new constitution they are pushing will change our government to a unicameral parliamentary system, thus abolishing the Senate. So what are their senatorial candidates for? It can only mean that contrary to the confident statements of Speaker Jose de Venecia and the local government executives that the Cha-cha train can no longer be stopped, they realize that it is about to be derailed.

Another contradiction is that Solicitor General Eduardo Nachura, who argued in favor of Cha-cha at the Supreme Court hearing yesterday, filed, when he was still a congressman, a proposed enabling law for the constitutional provision on the people's initiative. As former Sen. Rene Saguisag said, that was an admission by Nachura that the provision needs an enabling law. At yesterday's Supreme Court hearing, however, Nachura argued that no enabling law is needed.

Still another contradiction: The solicitor general is the lawyer of the government. So, he should be arguing for the Commission on Elections which rejected the petition of Sigaw ng Bayan and ULAP to schedule a plebiscite for Cha-cha because there is no enabling law. Why did he argue against the Comelec as if he is the counsel for Sigaw and ULAP?

In the Cha-cha controversy, Malacañang should legally be neutral. It should not speak out for or against it. But all this time, Malacañang has been openly pushing Cha-cha.

And where is Sigaw ng Bayan and ULAP getting the millions of pesos to pay for their pro-Cha-cha commercials and advertisements? Those TV commercials and newspaper ads cost about P100,000 per, and considering that there are so many of them, it must have already cost them hundreds of millions of pesos. Who is paying for all that?

Sigaw ng Bayan is a private organization and ULAP is composed of local government executives and they cannot afford those millions. Most local government units spend Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) funds (their share in the income tax payments of citizens) for their day-to-day expenses. So the government, and therefore the taxpayers, must be secretly footing the bill. They are committing large-scale estafa because they cannot spend tax money on their private projects, which the Cha-cha is.

It should be easy to trace the sources of these funds through the paper trail. The Commission on Audit (COA) and the Office of the Ombudsman, both independent constitutional bodies, should look into this.

* * *

There is something fishy in the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) leaning over backwards to allow two foreign firms to pre-qualify for the bidding for its project to supply Metro Manila with 300 million liters daily (MLD) of treated bulk water. The two firms, Kintech Technology of Taiwan and Ranhill Berhad of Malaysia, have bad track records. Kintech failed in two water projects in Taiwan, while Ranhill failed to live up to its commitments in the bidding for Napocor's Masinloc power plant.

I have previously written a couple of columns about this, but the MWSS still went ahead and pre-qualified them. I am glad that the House special committee on Metro Manila development chaired by Rep. Rozzano Rufino Biazon will conduct an investigation.

According to an open letter to the MWSS board sent by one of the two Filipino bidders, New Kanlaon Construction (the other is Sierra Madre Group), Kintech seems to have failed to disclose material facts which may have resulted in its inadvertent inclusion in the list of pre-qualified bidders. Kintech built recently two major plants for Taiwan Water Co. which, up to now, have not passed performance test runs, the letter said. These are the Kaotan and Wongkong Yuan plants, both located in Kaoshiung, Taiwan.

These two plants have a combined total project cost of approximately NT$960 million which is equivalent to only US$30 million, in violation of the MWSS pre-qualification norm of total cumulative projects in the past 10 years of US$100 million.

These two plants were completed in 2003 but failed their test runs on both quantity and quality of water in 2004. After prolonged explanations, negotiations and rectifications, the plants failed for the second time the required test runs in 2005.

As a result of these two failed tests and delays, Taiwan Water Co. sent a letter of termination to Kintech, demanding the return of all amounts paid. However, Kintech managed to temporarily set aside TWC's letter of termination and instead agreed to submit the dispute to arbitration with the Public Works Commission (PWC).

After arbitration, Kintech was given one last chance to rectify these two non-performing water plants up to 2007 and submit to a third test soon thereafter. That is more than five years after the contract was signed and more than three years from the date of physical completion of the two water projects.

"Were the above (information) disclosed in Kintech's pre-qualification documents?" New Canlaon's letter asked. "All prospective bidders were instructed to sign and submit the Authorization to Verify Information… What did the MWSS do with this authorization during the evaluation period of nine months?"

With Kintech's track record, how could the MWSS count on it to speedily build and operate its water project to avert an impending water crisis in Manila?

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Conrado de Quiros

DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT VINYL RECORDS are making a comeback.

I saw that in the Internet, from a CNN report. In many parts of Britain in particular, vinyl is flourishing. It is the preferred medium of dance deejays who say that for some reason, vinyl sounds so much better on the dance floor. It is the preferred medium as well of some bands, which have been producing singles on vinyl. Yes, producing. Vinyl is no longer just old records, it is new ones, too. Some recording companies have taken to pressing them all over again.

One store owner says it's not just the sound of the thing buyers go for, it's also the look of the thing. The covers of vinyl albums, which are bigger than those of CDs, make for a better canvas for artwork, and serve as posters that can be pinned on walls. In fact, the store owner says, there are quite a few buyers of LPs who do not own a turntable or record player, they just find the visuals "cool." Vinyl remains a niche market though. It's thriving, but it's not selling in the volumes it used to before the CD. It's not bound to overrun the music stores anytime soon.

Quite apart from my own interest in vinyl, I found the news fascinating because of one remarkable thing. Which is the survival of a seemingly antiquated article in an age of dizzying invention. Indeed, more than survival, a triumph of sorts. It's almost like beholding the manual typewriter giving the PC a run for its money.

This is an age, as I wrote some weeks ago, where digital technology has accomplished levels of compression that can fit an entire TV series in one DVD disc. In sound, you have MP3, or WMA, or even smaller audio files. You can convert your whole music library into them and fit it into a 20-gig iPod, or whatever player you prefer. Indeed, digital technology has even freed sound from its corporal vessel or container in the form of vinyl, cassette, CD, or DVD, by thrusting it into Cyberspace. It's just something floating out there that you can download via your friendly neighborhood peer-to-peer service as MP3 or whatever audio file you like.

Now, with that feast laid out before you, you'd go for the *tuyo*? Well, sometimes *tuyo* is great, especially with egg and *sinangag* (some Visayans like to pour chocolate onto the rice) on a gray and rain-drenched morning.

Which is what vinyl is. Its disadvantages are patent from the perspective above. On average you have only about 10 songs on a vinyl record, five or so on one side and the rest on the other—or "flip"—side, which is where the word "flipside" comes from. To the vinyl also owes the expressions, "You sound like a broken record," or "you're stuck in a groove," which happens when the turntable needle gets quite literally stuck in a groove of a vinyl record and keeps repeating and repeating a part of a song. But that's another story.

If you just want songs to pour forth from your sound system while you snuggle on a sofa, you will curse the vinyl. I don't know that they have invented a remote for the turntable. What I do know is that you physically have to go to the turntable to flip the record once it's through with one side. Might be good for therapy but not if your concept of therapy is listening to music till you doze off. You listen to an MP3 player with earphones stuck in your ears, and when you wake up the damn thing is still playing.

But if you're finicky about sound, there's the miracle of it. I've written about the aural wonders of vinyl in past columns, I leave the reader to read them if they can find them. Suffice it to repeat something I've discovered on my own in that respect. Which is that with vinyl you can raise the volume of your sound system without being assaulted by it: It kind of just floats around you or envelops you. With a CD, you hit a wall of sound, or the wall of sound hits you. You can play a vinyl at a fairly loud volume and still talk to people. With a CD forget talk, you'll just raise your BP.

That's the difference between the manual typewriter and the vinyl record. The vinyl record produces better sound, the manual typewriter does not produce better writing.

The survival, even triumph, of the vinyl, however, says something grander than that certain technologies have a way of refusing to die. It says to me at least that some oldies are goodies, and are often better than "newies." Or on a still grander scale, it says to me at least that more is not necessarily better, new is not necessarily better, convenient is not necessarily better. Sometimes less is more, old is newer, and doing the extra work infinitely more rewarding.

Reading easily comes to mind as against watching video, the first now more and more going the route of the turntable. Video today is easily the more plentiful, the more digestible, the more conveniently consumable. It is also in the larger scheme of things the less deeply pleasurable, the less a fountainhead of knowledge and wisdom. A book remains the best way two minds, the writer's and the reader's, can be linked together in pleasant conversation.

There are other examples. Sometimes black-and-white is more "colorful" than color: I don't know that color will make "Schindler's List" or "Good Night and Good Luck" better. I understand that the US Film Board has banned the colorization (something they've done to many old black-and-white Hollywood movies) of the classics, among them "Citizen Kane" and "Casablanca." They may exist only in their original black-and-white. That is a wonderfully sage decision. "Improvements" do not always improve.

Some even like to believe that old-fashioned love is better than newfangled sex, that "When I fall in love, it will be forever" is better than "What's love got to do with it?" But I leave others to debate that point.

Ordinary people

COMMENTARY

Denis Murphy

"WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE, DENIS?" President George W. Bush asked. We were alone in the Oval Office. He was talking to me but looking over my shoulder at a New York Yankees-Texas Rangers baseball game on TV. When Texas scored, he pumped his arm like Tiger Woods. He can't stand New York. No wonder, 80 percent of the city voted against him.

Presidents have sometimes flown me in for talks when they are worried about the "Far East," as they call our region. This was my first invitation from Bush.

I boarded Air Force One somewhere in Central Luzon (at an airport I'm not allowed to talk about). I had the plane to myself. It's the only way to fly: You can phone anyone in the world from the Pope to Saddam Hussein, work out in a gym, take a sauna or order any meal you can think of and later sink into leather arm chairs in the library, read, sip vintage cognac or *lambanog* (the plane has that, too) and listen to music till you wake up in Washington. Air Force One can make you feel far more important than you are. Too much time in it may be dangerous.

"It's the same as always," I told Bush. "Politics and plunder. The poor do the best they can."

"Too bad. I liked your president when I was there."

"She's changed, people say. Lots of problems."

"What do you want me to do about it?"

"Nothing, Mr. President. Please don't do anything."

He looked at me suspiciously for a second or two, then shrugged. "I was just offering. Anyway, that's not why I brought you here." He took a last peek at the game, then faced me. "My father whom you know well gave me a list of people I should see. They're not the people I usually see, but I'm going through the list one person a day. My father is old, I want to make him happy, as much as I can. Yesterday, it was Archbishop Desmond Tutu, tomorrow Bono of U2, you today. My father wants me to ask just one question: 'What should I do?'"

"About?"

"Anything, everything." He went back to his game.

I sat thinking. Outside the bulletproof window glass, roses moved in a breeze. It's up to me, I thought. The world's hanging in the balance and this is my one chance to save it. I felt like Harrison Ford or Tom Cruise, an older Tom Cruise. It's up to me.

The inning ended and he turned back to me, "Well, Denis, what do you have?"

I had nothing, except some thoughts that had occurred to me a year or so before when he was in Manila and the TV showed him with President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang.

"You're like Ms Arroyo, you know," I told him. "You're children of presidents. All your lives you've been surrounded by politicians, hangers-on, job seekers, expediters and lobbyists, power-brokers, generals. You hardly know what ordinary people are like. You think Vice President Richard Cheney is ordinary folk, don't you?"

"He makes me nervous sometimes. He shot his friend, the banker, you know."

"I know. Look, you have to talk to ordinary people. You'll get some idea of what people want you to do."

A loud voice interrupted me, "That's the most stupid suggestion I ever heard." Cheney stood in the doorway.

There was another voice: "It's not at all stupid. I like the suggestion." The older Bush appeared behind the vice president.

The president shook hands with everyone and then excused himself saying he had something to do. "Work it out," he told us. The three of us older people settled in arm chairs in a corner. We're all about the same age: Cheney is somewhat younger and Bush Senior a little older. We discussed my suggestion. Bush agreed. Cheney didn't like it. Our discussion grew heated. I looked over toward the President. He wasn't working. He was watching the game.

When we fell silent, the President called, "Come, watch this." We pulled chairs close to the desk and watched the game with him.

"This is what I'm going to do. If the Yankees win, I'll do what Denis suggests. I won't talk to senators, Cabinet officers, generals, CEOs and all the others, just ordinary people. If Texas wins, I'll go on as usual."

It was the bottom of the ninth. New York was at bat and trailed by a run, with two out and a man on first. Derek Jeter was at bat.

The count went to 3 and 2. Jeter fouled off three or four more pitches as the tension mounted. Then he hit a line drive down the right field line into the corner. It banged off the wall and rolled toward center field. The pinch runner had a good start and was rounding second. The center fielder picked up the ball and threw it in. The runner was around third. The second basement relayed the ball home. The ball was there first, but the runner slid wide of home plate and reached out a hand to touch it as he flashed past in a cloud of dust and the grace of ballet. He was safe. Score tied. The next batter singled, scoring Jeter, and that was it.

"I'm a man of my word, Denis. I'll follow your suggestion. No more politicians, generals, lobbyists, Christian Right theologians, etc. Just ordinary people. Tell Ms Arroyo. Maybe she should try it also."

I was on Air Force One on my way back. "You can talk to anyone you want," the steward told me. "Just tell me whom you want to speak to."

"Derek Jeter," I said. In an instant Jeter was on the line.

"Derek, this is Denis Murphy in Air Force One. You just saved the world. The President and I thank you."

"Who are you, some kind of nut?" He hung up.

The phone rang soon after. It was Bush. "I want to thank you again," he said. "I was talking to my Secret Service guys and you know they made a lot of sense. Tell my friend Gloria I recommend it for her also. Tell her I said so. Get away from the money and power. Go to the people. Who said that, by the way?"

Denis Murphy works with the Urban Poor Associates.

A 'silent epidemic'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

DIABETES HAS BEEN CALLED A "SILENT EPIDEMIC" afflicting a growing number of people in the developed and developing world. This is an "epidemic" that is growing rapidly. In 1985, according to the World Health Organization, there were 30 million people in the world with diabetes. These days, the estimate is put at 230 million, about 6 percent of the world's adult population.

More than 90 percent of diabetics have "type 2" diabetes, also called adult onset diabetes, because it generally begins in adulthood and is often due to obesity or overweight. A medical source says that in type 2 diabetes, "either the body does not produce enough insulin or the cells ignore the insulin, a hormone (produced in the pancreas) that converts blood sugar to energy for cells."

Ironically, most of the world's diabetics live in the developing world. Seven of the 10 countries with the highest number of diabetics are considered developing countries, with India topping the list with 35 million diabetics.

"It may seem strange that the developing world, which is often associated with hunger and inadequate nutrition for children, is now experiencing an epidemic in type 2 diabetes, a disease related to wealth and unhealthy lifestyle," notes the website of the World Diabetes Foundation. "This can be explained with the high degree of urbanization in some countries like India that have made people adapt the lifestyle from the industrial countries causing diseases such as diabetes related to this new lifestyle. It is also a fact that some people genetically have a higher risk of developing diabetes and, combined with great changes in lifestyle, this risk has turned to reality for many people in those countries."

* * *

NEW research, in a study published the other day in "Critical Care," shows that diabetes—not obesity—puts people at risk of developing critical illness and dying early. An article in HealthDay News says researchers in the United States analyzed data from 15,408 people between the ages of 44 and 66, and looked at their body-mass index (BMI), presence of diabetes, and a history of critical illness and death within three years. Their conclusion was that "in the absence of diabetes, obese people do not have a greater risk of suffering from acute organ failure or dying from acute organ failure than people who are not obese."

But in people with diabetes, regardless of their BMI, that is, whether they're overweight or not, "are three times more likely to become critically ill from acute organ failure and three times more likely to die from any cause than people without diabetes."

The relationship between obesity, diabetes and critical illness is complex, say the authors of the study, and "obesity itself may not predict poor health outcomes."

Meanwhile, a large study (involving nearly 100,000 subjects) of Japanese adults has found that those with diabetes were more likely to develop cancer, especially of certain organs such as the pancreas and liver.

Manami Inoue, who wrote the study, said that researchers had long suspected the link between diabetes and cancer, but had not had conclusive evidence. But he cautioned that either disease may be the cause of the other, and both may be tied to obesity in many patients.

"Also, diabetic patients pay more visits to the doctor and the increased vigilance may result in more cancer diagnoses," the study said.

* * *

DIABETES is a disease that one can only hope to control, not eliminate. And the irony is that the secret to bringing one's blood sugar levels down to "normal" levels is pretty simple: diet, plenty of exercise and lifestyle changes, particularly reducing stress. But, take it from a diabetic for over 10 years now, the "formula" is easier said than done.

For diabetics like me who find diet, exercise and rest a difficult equation to follow, there is instead a regimen of prescribed drugs, including insulin.

The trouble is, as Carla Johnson wrote in an AP dispatch this week, "many patients stop taking their medicine far sooner than they should, and that decision can be deadly when the drugs treat heart disease or diabetes."

One study reviewed the medical records of over 11,000 diabetes patients and found that those who didn't take their drugs—hypoglycemics, blood pressure drugs and statins—had higher rates of hospitalization and death.

Researchers said the cost of drugs was a major factor in the decision of patients to stop taking a certain drug, especially if the patient was taking a number of prescribed drugs. "The research suggests that patients and their doctors must work harder," wrote Johnson. "Patients need to ask, 'What are the most important medicines in my treatment, the ones that will help me live long enough to see my grandchildren grow up?'" said Dr. Patrick O'Connor, one of the researchers.

* * *

DURING A RECENT visit to my endocrinologist, Dr. Beth Pacheco, I inquired about the anti-diabetic powers of *ampalaya* capsules and virgin coconut oil which I am currently taking because I'd heard so many stories about their health benefits.

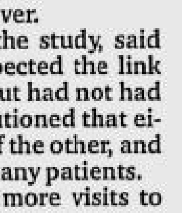
There is still no hard and fast scientific evidence on their efficacy, Dr. Pacheco told me, though a scientifically rigorous study on VCO is due to be released (if it hasn't been yet). "So I can't tell you whether these really help or that they don't do any harm, we still don't know," she said.

I was disappointed on hearing this because I was hoping that *ampalaya* and VCO could take the place of diet, exercise and lifestyle change. But as my doctor smilingly warned me: "I can increase your dosage (of medicines), but I can't exercise for you, nor can I do the eating for you."

As always, the secret to good health lies in my own lazy hands.

Torture and death in World War II

LOOKING BACK



Ambeth R. Ocampo

WHEN I LOOK BACK ON THE TWO DECADES I have been writing about the tail end of the Spanish period, I remember a time when I wanted to shift to pre-history. I felt that library or archival research was not as exciting as archeological fieldwork. Of course, I had romantic ideas of the job after watching those Indiana Jones films or reading about the discovery of the treasures of King Tut. All my dreams crumbled when I realized that archeology meant working in the sun and required a lot of courses in the natural sciences.

Then there was the plan to shift to a more contemporary historical period where the research materials are all in English. Dr. Milagros Guerrero dissuaded me by saying that if I was to leave the research area then that would mean the loss of yet another person who could read Spanish. Taking that as a challenge, I stayed on and concentrated on the life and times of our heroes who are hidden from most because of language. So far there have been no regrets from my side.

When I look at all the books I have accumulated in the past 30 years, I realize that I have always returned to particular shelves for work or pleasure. I don't think I will ever be able to read all the Philippine literature that now lies buried in boxes for lack of shelf space. There is also a lot of anthropology, local history and even books on World War II that I hope to read some day even if these are not technically "my period."

The Japanese Occupation is something that I would hear about from my parents, grandparents and people of that generation. It was a time of terror and uncertainty, a time that brought out the best and worst in people. While browsing aimlessly in the World War II shelf, hoping to find something for a column, I found material on the Tokyo War Crimes Trial with reference to the Japanese record in the Philippines. It made very painful reading.

The opening statement of Maj. Pedro Lopez, the Filipino prosecutor, was long and horrendous. Atrocities were committed all over the archipelago and while he chose to highlight some cases as examples, he apologized for the use of frank and precise language. "While realizing our duty to express ourselves here in temperate and restrained terms, the crimes committed to my country and my people were so shocking, so brutal and so revolting that resort to euphemism would only do violence to the truth," he explained.

Just reading the text made me sick in the stomach and I cannot even imagine having to look at the full documentary and pictorial evidence submitted during these trials. Anyone who was involved in this process must require some sort of counseling. This is definitely not for the squeamish. Some excerpts:

"Of the manifold instances of such torture and sadism in the Philippines, our proof will point out that in February 1945 in Manila, in the home of Bartolome Pons, a pregnant woman with an 11-month-old baby in her arms was shot and killed. The Japanese started to leave, but hearing the baby cry, he returned and killed it with two shots.

"At the Campos residence, the breast of one woman was hacked out. At St. Paul's College, a baby was hurled into the air by a Japanese soldier and impaled on the bayonet of another. At Fort Santiago, a piece of skin was sliced off the back of a prisoner's hand and he was forced to eat it. The skin on his face and arm was twisted with a pair of wooden pliers.

"At Palo, Leyte, in the Visayan Islands, three members of the Palacio family, including a woman, were arrested in February 1942, their hands tied behind their backs and hanged by the arms from the branch of a tree for five hours. They were beaten with thorn switches until they bled. On the armpits of the two male members gasoline was poured and set on fire.

"In Iloilo, on Sept. 18, 1943, Lucas Doctolero was crucified on the ground, three six-inch nails driven through each wrist and the base of his skull. In Romblon, on Nov. 17, 1943, a blind woman was dragged out of her house and stripped naked. She was hog-tied and then hanged from a tree head down.

"At Kabayo, Mountain Province, in Northern Luzon, Tayambang Chagsa was forced on two occasions, in March 1943, to drink a four-gallon can of water. A Japanese bounced on his distended belly, then he was hanged with his hands tied behind his back. While he was hanging, his G-string was set on fire, consuming all but two feet of it. The remaining portion was tied around Chagsa's head and again ignited.

"In Bacolod, Negros Occidental, a man was beaten with a club, thrown across the floor, and the next evening, he was forced to jump from a window to the asphalt pavement 20 feet below. Another was strapped to a table and his wrists burned with an alcohol flame until the odor of burnish flesh filled the room. A third man had a bayonet thrust through his arm progressively deeper as he was questioned.

"In Dumanjug, Cebu, a three-and-a half-year-old child was bayoneted and thrown into the sea."

Watching those TV documentaries on the Nazi death camps can be very distressing indeed because it is graphic, but reading about what happened in the Philippines to both Americans and Filipino civilians is worse because it hits so close to home.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Teen phobia

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THE COVER OF THE LATEST ISSUE OF SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN Mind had "TEEN BRAIN" in big bold letters, showing a young man with several items orbiting his head: A cell phone, junk food, comic books, a guitar, strips of film and a pack of cigarettes. His eyes were blocked out by a Play Station control and what looked like false teeth and his mouth was open in a silent scream.

Let's face it, societies everywhere suffer from teen phobia, an irrational fear of young people. We see them as unthinking, unfeeling (in Filipino *"dedma"*) automatons, driven by raging sex hormones, their MP3 players and, if we are to believe the growing literature around teen brains, a confusing tangle of live wires in their skulls ready at any time to short circuit and explode.

Growing up

Many societies seemed to have recognized some kind of transition period between childhood and adulthood. As early as the 13th century, the French were using the word "adolescent" which was derived from the Latin *"adolescere"* (to grow up). Adolescent meant "growing up."

But most societies also saw this period as quite brief, children practically forced into adulthood after a brief interlude. I did a bit of research to prepare for a paper delivered last week to the Society of Adolescent Medicine of the Philippines and found that in the Spanish Civil Code's provisions for marriage, which we used from 1889 to 1929, the minimum age of marriage was 14 for males and 12 for females.

During the American colonial period, a new Marriage Act was passed in 1929 which raised the minimum age of marriage to 16 for males and 14 for females. Those provisions were in force until 1989, when we adopted a new Family Code that pegged the minimum age of marriage at 18 for both males and females.

We see in the earlier lower ages of marriage a tacit understanding that once puberty had been reached, people were practically adults. The Spanish Civil Code even allowed 14-year-olds to draw up wills!

We don't have indigenous words in the Philippines corresponding to the adolescent, *"binata"* and *"dalaga"* referring to people who have reached puberty but who are still single.

Perhaps it made some sense in the past, this brief period of "growing up" given that the world was simpler then. During the American colonial period, if you finished Grade 6, you could teach one of the lower grades. These days I wouldn't trust some of our doctorate holders with a Grade 1 class.

I've been reviewing folklore anthologies from the Summer Institute of Linguistics and am amazed at all the advice given by older people in communities to the young ones, before and after marriage. What's striking is that the communication lines were there, adults exhorting adolescents to pick up practical skills and attitudes.

Teenager

Where are we today? The English word "teener" dates back to the late 19th century, but "teenage" and "teenager" come into use only after World War II, referring to the ages thir-teen to eight-teen. Western society had created a very specific period that recognized puberty as a coming of age, but also imposing a prolonged period for social learning, mainly in terms of college.

While wary and even fearful of the teenager, Western societies have generally been more liberal, pushing their young to become independent and assertive. The baby boom after World War II meant millions of teenagers coming of age in the 1960s, a chance for businesses to cash in, urging teenagers to spend for their own distinct fashions, music, even food.

More traditional societies, like our own, have had more difficulties dealing with this new human subspecies. It doesn't help that they're maturing more rapidly now, in physical terms. One of my friends wept while telling me "daddy's little girl" was now menstruating at the age of 9.

Rightly so, we've raised the minimum age of marriage knowing it takes much more now to become a spouse and a parent. But we sometimes end up being overprotective. We want teenagers to become independent, but continue to decide for them, from their clothes to their choices of college courses. We want them to be assertive, but reprimand them when they speak their minds. And on matters of courtship, marriage and sex, we impose a culture of silence, terrified that they might "do it."

This ambivalence is dangerous, given that the world has become so much more complicated. Large numbers of young teenagers, girls in particular, are moving from small rural villages to the big cities to become domestic helpers, factory workers. City-wise kids know many of them are being prepared to be exported overseas. Thousands have already joined the armies of the night as call center employees dealing with the woes of the world.

It's a highly sexualized, highly competitive, highly commercialized world out there, and what do we have to offer? Moralistic advice, a list of prohibitions and their weekly allowance, thank you, but sorry, mom and dad will have to leave and work overseas so listen to your *lolo* and *lola*.

I'd like to return to Philippine laws to show how our views of the young are changing. Until recently, a young person who violated the law was thrown into jail with hardened adult criminals. At one point, we even had minors in death row. It was a major scandal, yet it spoke of the harsh realities of adolescence in the Philippines.

A few weeks back, we passed a new Juvenile Justice Law which reflects a more modern view of adolescence. Sen. Francis Pangilinan, the principal author of the new law, sent me a note recently noting, with alarm, that there have been rumors going around to the effect that anyone below 15 would not be held liable for any offense. He emphasized that the young, no matter what their age is, will still be responsible for whatever offense they've committed, and may even be required to make amends to their victims.

At the same time, the new law recognizes that the adolescent, the teenager, is still growing up and should not be thrown into jail with adults. There will be youth rehabilitation centers, giving young offenders a new chance at life.

Our laws are actually quite progressive, changing in response to new times and new needs. The question now is whether our educators, our physicians, our religious, and, most importantly, our parents can keep pace, too.

I am sure that in the past, parents and elders also harbored many of the uncertainties and doubts we have today about our young, but they did seem to have more trust in the ability of young people to face up to life. We might do well to follow those models, waiting at the sides and watching from a distance, yet assuring the young that we're always ready to come to their side, with a listening ear, an open mind and a generous heart.

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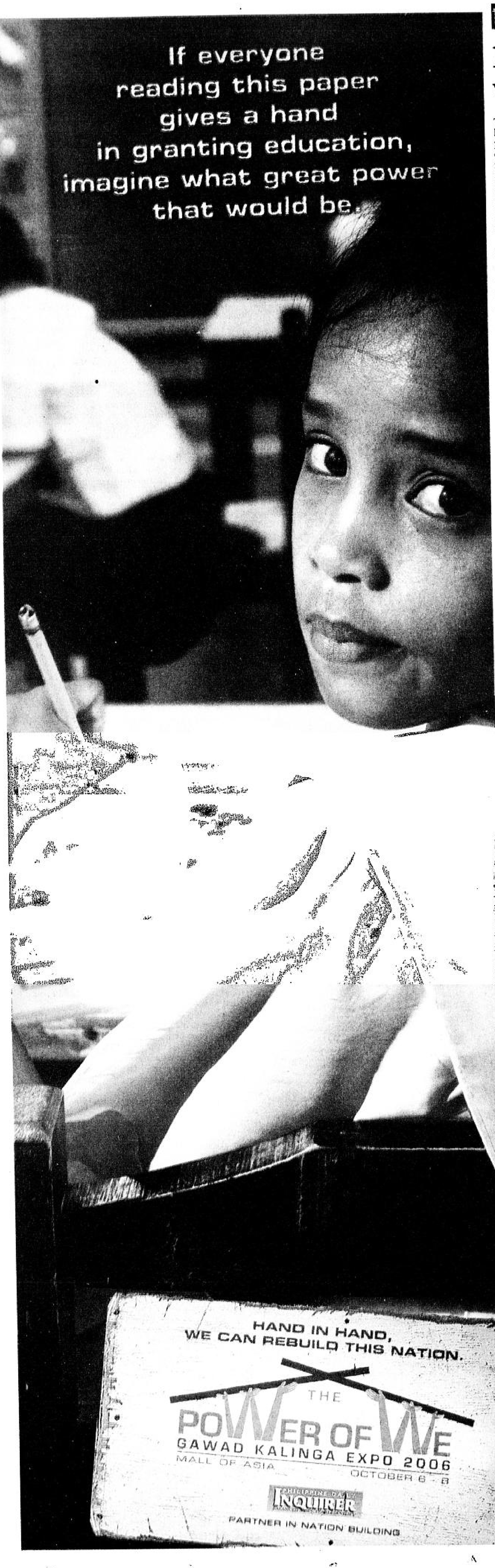
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Deceiving the youth via Charter change

TO SAY THAT THE YOUTH WILL BENEFIT A lot from Charter change is not true. In fact, the proposed Cha-cha removes the provisions in our present Constitution that recognize the role of the youth in nation-building. The deletion shows how the present administration underestimates and neglects our youth. This, moreover, reflects where the Arroyo administration has placed the education and welfare of the Filipino youth in the hierarchy of its priorities.

Another Cha-cha proposal is the liberalization of the Philippine educational system, which would allow 100-percent foreign ownership of Philippine schools. In the end, this would commercialize Philippine education and make it a profit-making commodity rather than a basic right of the Filipino youth.

The youth have a big role to play in running this country. But the government would want to mislead them into giving up that role through Cha-cha.

—ABIGAIL NAZARETH D. AQUINO,
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Maynilad committed to improve service in Parañaque

WE SHARE NEAL CRUZ'S CONCERN OVER the water supply situation in Parañaque City. (PDI, 9/13/06) We have been working with the city government to achieve our twin goals (1) of upgrading our service for our existing customers in the city; and (2) of extending our service to the 45 percent of the city's population that remains unserved up to now.

At present, Maynilad provides water to 30,935 Parañaque households (246,224 residents) of which around 16,000 enjoy 24-hour water service; 5,700, 12- to 23-hour water service; and nearly 10,000, less than 12-hour water service. Compared to last year's situation, these figures represent a big improvement in terms of water availability and pressure. Among the subdivisions that have benefited are San Antonio Valley, Better Living and Marcelo Green.

The big improvement can be attributed to a number of factors. Among them, the 3-R (Recover, Reallocate and Resell) Program initiated by our president, Fiorello R. Estuar, after he took over Maynilad in 2004; and this year's transfer to a lower site of the Villamor Pumping Station.

Maynilad will complete this October the pipe-laying projects at R. Medina, Aurirena Compound and Canaynay Avenue. Another pipe-laying project is going on at San Antonio Valley 2 and in the Silverio Compound, which is due for completion by November this year. Other similar projects are expected to be finished in 2007.

As for BF Homes Parañaque and other unserved subdivisions, Maynilad, as a member of the Parañaque City Water Crisis Committee, remains committed to provide water service to them. However, up to this time Maynilad has not been allowed to enter BF Homes, neither has it been paid the P5 million in arrears owed by that subdivision's water system administrator, Philwater. Two other subdivisions, Camella Homes and Camella Greenheights, were connected to Maynilad just last week. With the directive from the National Water Resource Board stopping the operation of deep wells, especially in areas where Maynilad operates, we expect other subdivisions to eventually connect to us.

On distributing water more equitably in Parañaque, this matter depends on getting the right-of-way to subdivisions, and on getting additional water supply from the planned 300 MLD (million liters a day) treatment facility at Muntinlupa. This facility is expected to be completed by 2011. Once this is operational, Maynilad will be able to provide all of Parañaque, plus Las Piñas, Muntinlupa and portions of Cavite province, with 24-hour water service.

Lastly, for Parañaque alone, Maynilad has earmarked P298 million of the P33-billion capital allotment for the entire "west zone."

—JESUS MATUBIS JR.,
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MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road,
Balara, Quezon City

A closer look at two recent disasters

TWO DISASTERS WITH INTERNATIONAL implications struck the Philippines in recent weeks—the nursing board scam and the Guimaras oil spill. A closer look at these two events shows that both are rooted in the evil human desire to get more than one gives in life, to receive rewards without the benefit of hard work, to get ahead by whatever means and to escape accountability for wrongdoings.

The nursing board leakage could not have happened without the collusion of some people in the Professional Regulation Commission, Philippine Nurses Association and review centers. As a result of their greed, honest examinees have suffered. Even worse, our reputation in the international community as a country that trains quality nurses has been tarnished. It will be difficult to repair this damaged reputation.

As to the Guimaras disaster, Petron is trying to wash its hands of its moral responsibility by blaming the owners of MT Solar I. But why should a captain, whose qualification is suspect, whose papers are defective and whose experience is limited, be allowed to take command of a defective vessel loaded with oil? The answer is simple: Somebody wanted to make huge profits above huge profits.

Why this crazy sense of values? It's the desire to gain without pain, to get rich without working, to amass a fortune without regard to ethics.

—REV. SALVADOR D. EDUARTE,
retired minister,
United Church of Christ,
San Nicolas, Pangasinan 2447

Advance payment of interest on SSS loans

THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM POSTED P3.7 billion in net profit in the first semester. SSS president Corazon de la Paz said the members' contribution exceeded the amount of benefits paid to members for the period. The amount was 23 percent higher than the P3 billion in net income registered in the same period last year. (PDI, 9/1/06)

In 2001, De la Paz said that the SSS earned P23.3 billion from its operations during the last six months of 2001, making the institution one of the best performing government agencies around. Yet, she asked the American consultancy firm Watson Wyatt Worldwide for evaluation. One recommendation of its president, John Haley, was to increase the 8.40 percent monthly contribution to 16 percent—to which both the employers and the employees raised objections. Not only that, Haley recommended cuts in SSS benefits. The recommendation, of course, ran counter to the plan of our lawmakers when they created the SSS.

In the INQUIRER issue of Jan. 21, 2000, there was a report that Rep. Gerardo Espina introduced HB 842 and Sen. Raul Roco filed SB 983 seeking to increase the minimum SSS pension to P6,000. Instead, what was increased were the enormous salaries of SSS executives. Again, in the INQUIRER issue of Sept. 7, 2001, it was reported that an SSS executive vice president was getting paid a monthly salary of P350,000. The report described the pay as indecent. Probably, because of this, the SSS reported that the actuarial life of the SSS fund will last until 2031 only, despite the billions of pesos it was earning annually.

If the SSS earned 23 percent higher than it earned in the previous year, why couldn't it raise by 10 percent the SSS pensions last Sept. 1, its 49th anniversary? Since President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed the presidency in 2001, there has been no increase in SSS pensions. In contrast, during the two and a half years of the Estrada presidency, when the SSS president was Carlos Arellano, the SSS raised pensions by 10 percent for two successive years.

Under Estrada and Arellano, the SSS had no anti-poor policy. But under the present administration, the SSS has issued a memorandum (MC 14-P) directing that, effective March 1, 2004, the first-year interest on SSS loans be deducted in advance. Not only that, a service fee of 1 percent of the loan should also be deducted in advance. Why deduct the interest in advance? You haven't used the money yet. More importantly, you need the money badly, that's why you got that loan. And why charge a 1-percent service fee when employees are there and being paid precisely to render such service?

These sad impositions never happened in previous administrations, not ever since the SSS was established in 1957—because previous presidents (Garcia, Macapagal, Marcos, Aquino, Ramos and Estrada) adhered to Sec. 2 of RA 1161 as amended.

—ELIGIO M. PASTORIN,
Rositaville Subd.,
Concepcion I, Marikina City

Martial law, dictatorship, never again

LAST SEPT. 21, WE CELEBRATED THE INTERnational Day of Peace and we also remembered those who suffered for resisting the Marcos dictatorship; and we remembered their courage.

In these turbulent times, let us again muster the courage and reawaken the vigilance we had during the dictatorship. Let us spread the torches of vigilance among our youth. Let us again cry out with passion and conviction, "Never again to a dictatorship!"

Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP) held a Mass, lighted candles and laid flowers at the Agdao memorial stone (Davao City) which was unveiled on Sept. 21, 2002. It was built in memory of those who fought for democracy and human rights during the martial law years. The memorial is located beside the Sto. Niño chapel along R. Castillo Street where, on Dec. 1,1984, four persons were killed and four others were wounded reportedly by men in uniform.

We remember how martial law, declared by Ferdinand Marcos 34 years ago, resulted in the massacre, torture, detention, disappearance and death of thousands of Filipinos who remain nameless and faceless until today.

Today, we are confronted by a similar challenge—a creeping martial law. In the face of widespread poverty in the midst of abundance, we have a huge foreign debt; rallies are not tolerated, government critics are labeled terrorists and communists and subjected to warrantless arrests and political detention; extrajudicial killings have become rampant, perpetrated openly with impunity.

We must be vigilant and face the challenge to defend and assert our human rights.

—RITA M. MELECIO,
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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
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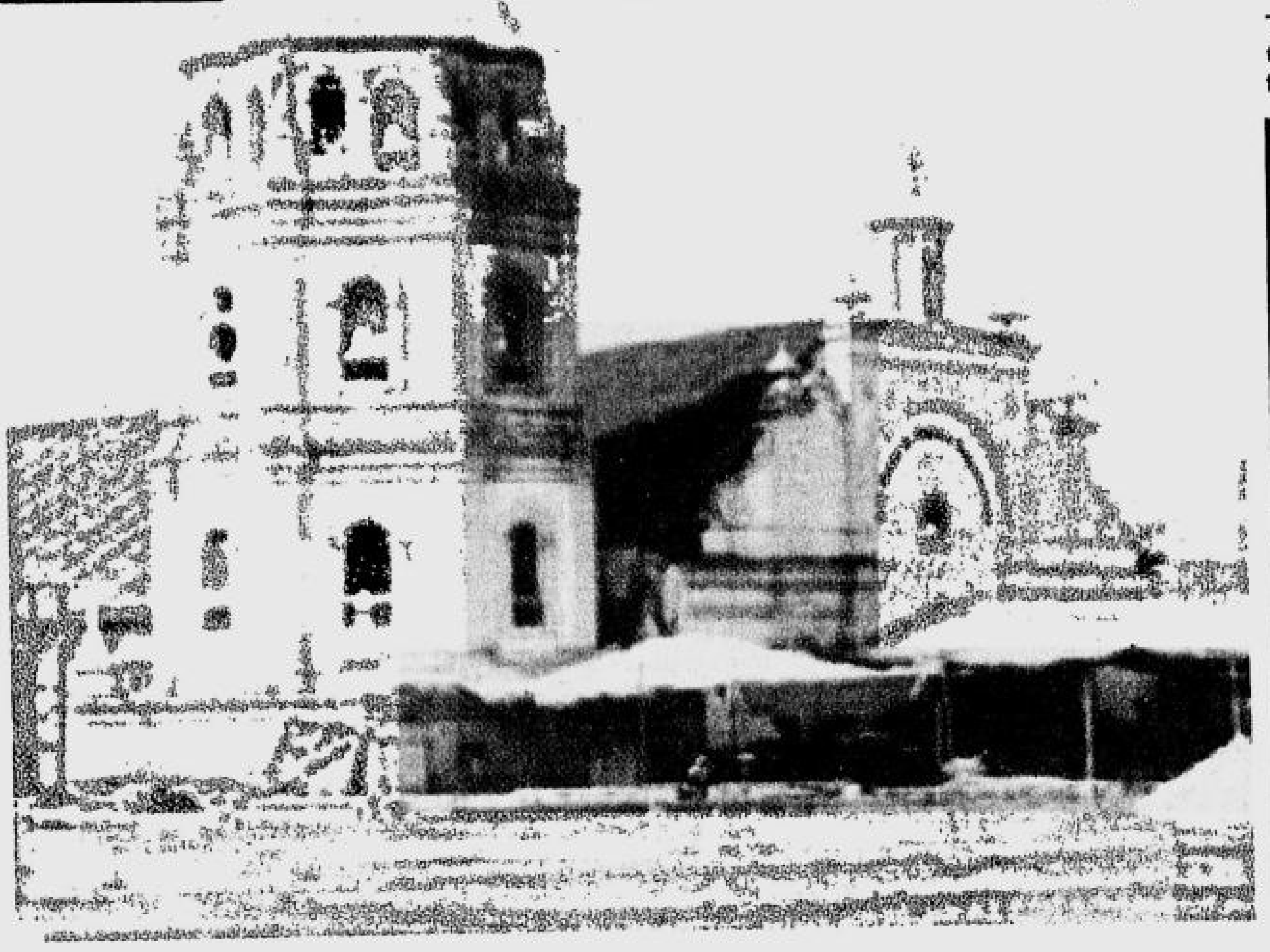

THE SAN Guillermo Church, shown in this 1995 photo published in "Singsing" Magazine, was the last structure that remained standing in Bacolor town when it was gobbled up by lahar from Mount Pinatubo. PHOTO FROM JUAN D. NEPOMUCENO CENTER FOR KAPAMPANGAN STUDIES

PINATUBO REHAB

Faith, community grow in disaster

By Tonette Orejas
Bacolor, Pampanga

TWO ARE MEDICAL doctors, a handful are engineers. Some are small traders and farmers while others are professionals.

In Cabalantian—the village in Bacolor, Pampanga, that bore what the late Dr. Raymundo Punongbayan had called the "cruelest wrath" of Mount Pinatubo's lahar (mudflow) in Central Luzon—this group of more than 50 men and women is known by the initials "PPC."

That stands for the Parish Pastoral Council, and this one has really gone out of the mold, enriching the ways of the Catholic Church to respond to disasters.

"That is what our leaders in the [St. Joseph's] parish are doing. They continue. They move on. They are not discouraged," Fr. Renato Sabile said in a message congratulating the PPC in April last year as it started another fund-raising musical concert.

It was the witnessing of how the villagers live out their faith to fight life's battles, faith in God and neighbors that inspired the parish lay leaders to respond, according to Dr. Ma. Salve Olalia, PPC president for external affairs.

To her, what befell Cabalantian on Oct. 1, 1995 was a "test of faith" to the less than 20,000 villagers.

Quick end

At dusk and in just a little over two hours, Bacolor's biggest and most prosperous village was entirely gone, buried under 20-30 feet of lahar that Typhoon "Mameng's" rains washed down from the slopes of the volcano to the Pasig-Potrero River and its tributaries, mainly the Gugu Creek.

From there, lahar stampeded like horses gone berserk, trampling on everything that the people had worked hard for. It killed some 1,000 people, mostly children.

"*Susi na mu ing milakwan kekami. Ala nu reng bale* (What were left were keys to houses. The houses were all gone)," said rice trader Nida Samia, one of the council's secretaries.

"It was enough that we were alive," said Erlinda Cortez, who, almost 24 hours of being marooned on a rooftop, was plucked out by helicopter-borne rescue teams from the military.

Many others braved their way to safety, trudging on quicksand-like mud, sinking but rising at every step.

Despite the devastation, the mass exodus and the risks that came with the government's plan to consign Bacolor, Pampanga's catch basin of lahar, 30 families refused to leave Cabalantian.

Ernesto Salvador, who belonged to that group, echoed a value from the past.

"If you move out, it's like abandoning your village. You can't leave your birthplace just like that," his daughter-in-law, Elizabeth Quiazon, remembered the old man as saying—a reasoning that, she said, she could not entirely comprehend then.

Will to stay

The decision of the 30 families to stay was what the council first defended.

"There are people there," Olalia recalled, telling public works officials during meetings that most often ended in heated arguments over a plan to sacrifice Cabalantian.

But then, those who had left for the evacuation centers returned during the day and left at night to take comfort from being just in the village even when it had become eerily unfamiliar, to reunite with neighbors or to think of ways to start all over again, Samia said.

The village had no electricity, no water and no road.

The council's members, who were also part of the Bacolor Core Group, decided to stay when they had the resources to restart elsewhere.

Prayer brigades

They campaigned for the construction of the Gugu Dike to save the village from further lahar onslaught. They sought the reconstruction of the old MacArthur Highway to give back access to and from the village.

No funds were easily ready, though. The council matched the prayer brigades of the residents by scouting for funds.

More people have returned in the last 10 years, counting at 370 families to date, according to barangay chair Jomar Hizon.

More roles

Looking back, Olalia said the council had taken on other tasks aside from doing its traditional roles of assisting the priest in administering to the parish and helping in religious services.

What the council actually did, together with the former parish priest, Nestor Tayag, is lead rehabilitation efforts anchored on deeper spirituality.

The Mass resumed on Nov. 1, 1995, held in memory of those who died. Then, the residents came out in full force on March 19, 1996, the Feast of St. Joseph, with Pampanga Archbishop Paciano Aniceto leading the celebration on a truck set amid a gray landscape of lahar.

Only when the life-saving efforts were in place did the council continue the construction of the church.

"The community, which was struggling on sheer faith, was our living church," said Olalia.

Donations

The makeshift chapel was built in Zone 5 in 1997, on a one-hectare lot the council bought from donations of the residents before the disaster.

The new church has taken shape. Concrete pillars, as long as 32 meters, have been driven into the ground; columns have been installed, and the retaining walls and ground filling have been done, according to engineer Noel Miranda, who was with the construction committee.

The council had spent P5 million on those works. The money was raised from musical concerts, house-to-house solicitations, raffle draws, and donations from natives working here or abroad.

It needs P30 million more to finish the new church designed for free by architect Yolanda Reyes, former dean of the College of Architecture of the University of Santo Tomas.

(IF YOU wish to help in the church-building project, contact Dr. Ma. Salve Olalia at 0918-9056108)

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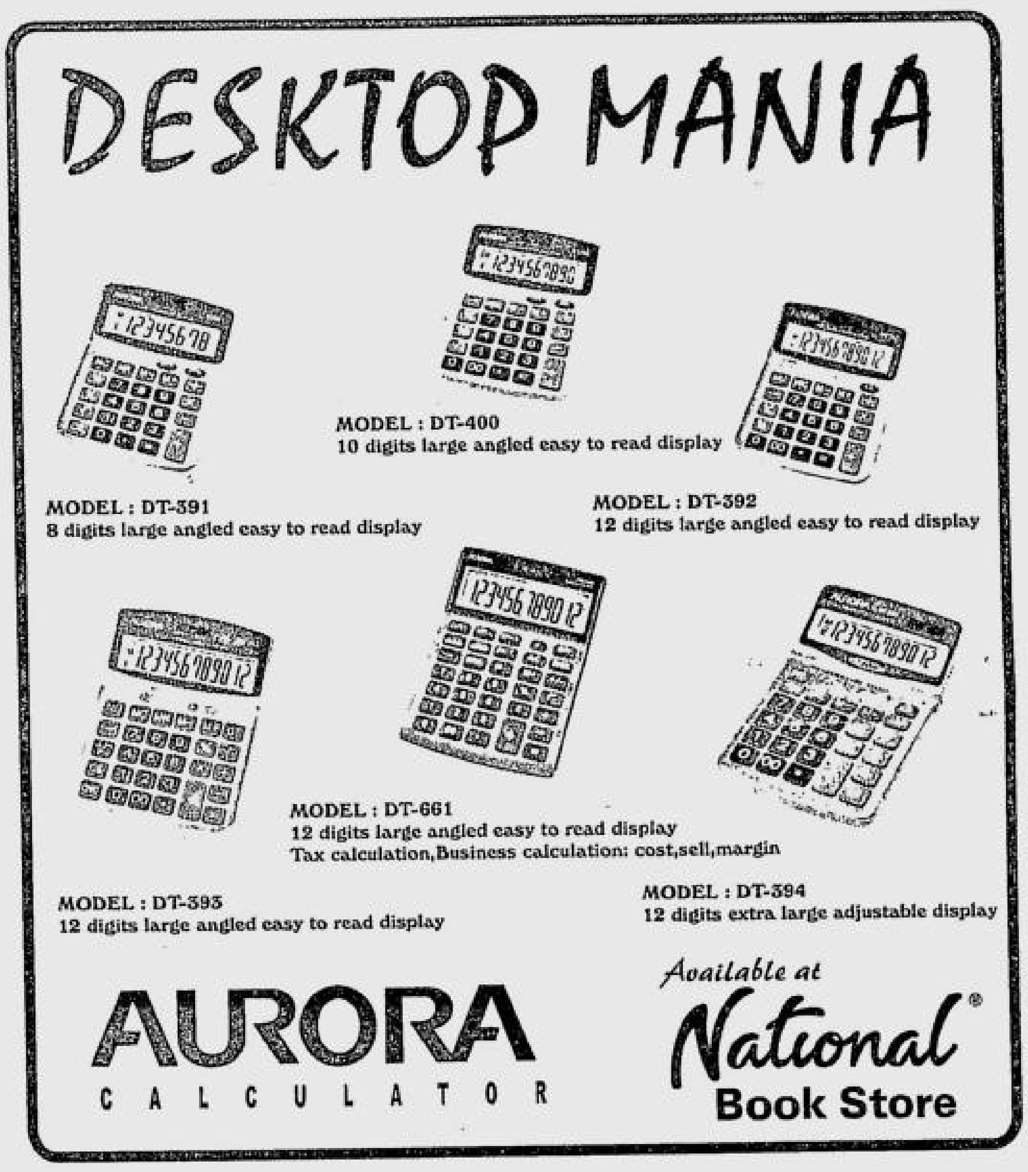

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Eastern Visayas braces for 'Milenyo'

By Joey A. Gabieta and Jhunnex Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—CLOSE TO 300 COMMUTERS were stranded yesterday in three ports in Eastern Visayas due to tropical storm "Milenyo."

The regional Office of Civil Defense directed all local government units to activate their disaster coordinating councils to avoid loss of lives or property.

Adriano Fuego, OCD-8 chief, said that as of yesterday afternoon, the Coast Guard did not allow vessels bound for Cebu, Luzon and Mindanao to leave the ports of Liloan in Southern Leyte, Ormoc City, and Looc in Allen, Northern Samar due to strong winds and heavy rains brought about by the storm.

Milenyo was expected to hit landfall today in the northern and eastern parts of Samar.

The weather bureau placed Leyte and Biliran under Storm Signal No. 1 and Western Samar, Eastern Samar and Northern Samar under Storm Signal No. 2.

As of yesterday morning, Milenyo was spotted 220 kilometers east-northeast of Borongan, Eastern Samar, with maximum sustained winds of 85 kph near the center and gustiness of 100 kph.

Classes in all elementary and high schools in the region were suspended.

Tacloban Mayor Alfredo "Bejo" Romualdez directed the over 1,000 city workers not to report for work, except members of the city disaster council like those from the city engineering, social welfare and general services offices.

In Cebu City, passengers bound for Camotes Island and Ormoc were stranded yesterday after the Cebu Coast Guard prevented small vessels from leaving for areas expected to be affected by the storm.

Cebu Coast Guard deputy commander Chief Petty Officer Lemuel Alquiza said 72 passengers bound for Camotes were stranded at the Danao City port.

A number of passengers were also stranded in Pier 4 in Cebu City after the Supercat fastcraft was not allowed to sail for Ormoc yesterday.

Alquiza said that if the weather condition would not normalize, more vessels would be grounded in the the city, especially those bound for Samar and Leyte.

Those below 1,000 gross tonnage are not allowed to travel to areas where Signal No. 1 is hoisted.

Small fishing boats were prohibited from venturing to the open seas. Residents living in areas prone to flash floods and landslides were advised to seek safe places.

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OVERPRICED MEDICINES

Ombudsman OKs filing of graft raps vs 5 Sipalay City officials

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—THE OFFICE OF THE OMbudsman-Visayas approved the filing of charges against five officials of the Sipalay City government for violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

It, however, dismissed the complaint against Sipalay Mayor Oscar Montilla.

Facing charges of violations of Section 3 of Republic Act No. 3019 for purchasing overpriced medicines are city revenue collection officer Evangeline Seneres, accountant Eva Sabusap, budget officer Fernando Balbin, health officer Noel Villanueva and treasurer Renato Manila.

The Ombudsman's decision to file the charges stemmed from a complaint lodged by former Sipalay Councilor Carlos Legislador, who cited the officials' involvement in the purchase of the overpriced medicine and supplies.

Legislador filed his complaint at the People's Graftwatch of Negros Occidental.

The Ombudsman's resolution, furnished by the complainant to the INQUIRER, stated that in November 2001, city health officer Villanueva requested the emergency purchase of medicines and supplies worth P784,981.75 for victims of the dust pollution from the closed Sipalay Mines.

The city bought the medicines from Capricorn Pharma, Negros Denta Pharmacea, San Marino Laboratories and Therapeutic Industries, the Ombudsman was informed.

"We are not persuaded and we cannot close our eyes to the overwhelming evidence that the medicines purchased by the City of Sipalay purposely to help alleviate the illness of its residents arising from the dust pollution were overpriced," the Ombudsman's resolution said.

It cited the public officials' failure to "exercise due diligence to protect the coffers of the city."

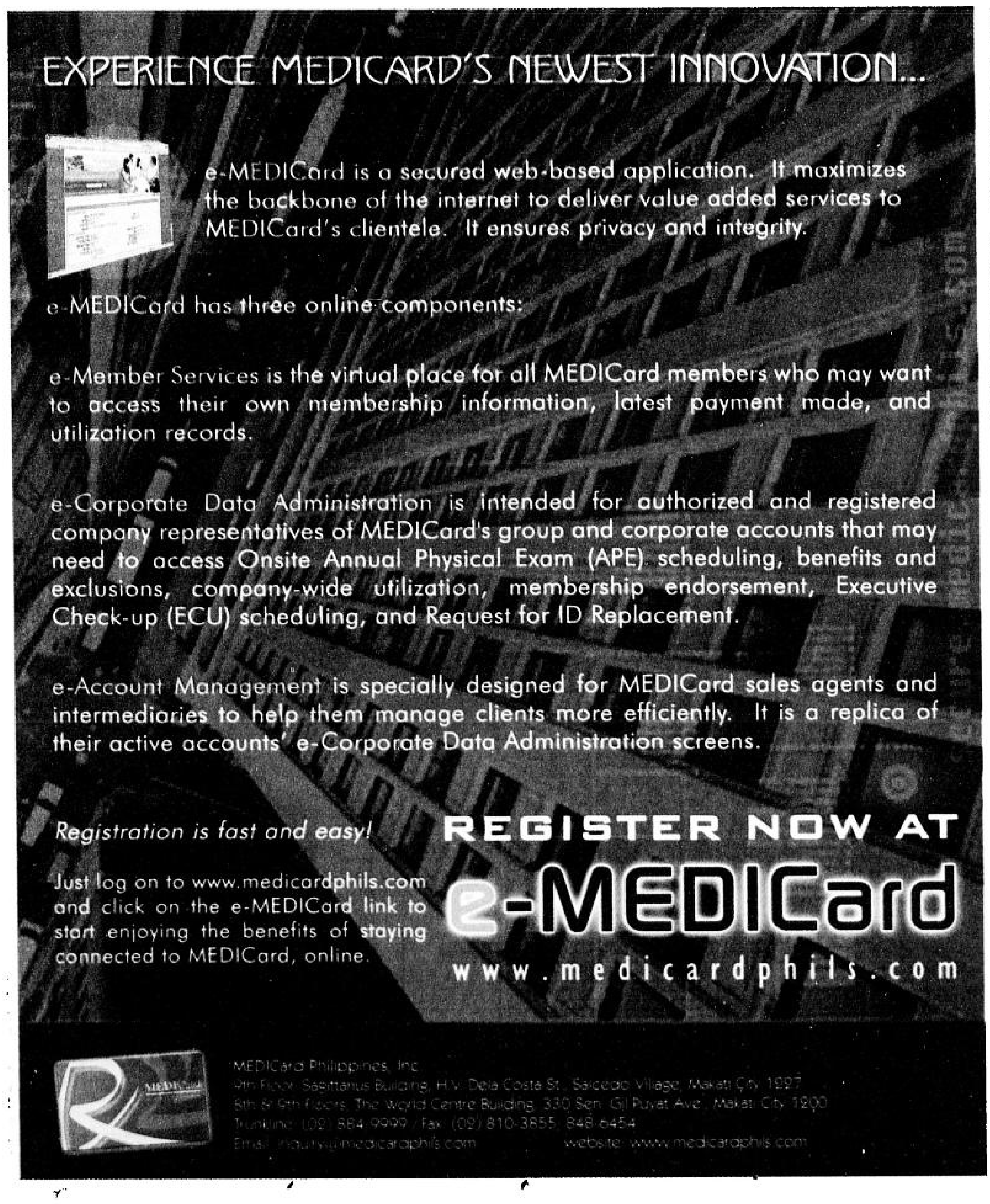
It further noted that "in the end," the officials "allowed their favored suppliers to profit from their losses."

"Such an act is worthy of condemnation because the principles of justice and equity demand that no one should profit from anyone's losses," it added.

The price quotations coming from Hamelen Marketing and GX International were spurious and the rest of the suppliers who allegedly submitted their quotations were nowhere to be found, the resolution said.

It noted that the purchase of surgical scissors alone were 600 percent above the prices of other suppliers, while the disposable syringes were 200 percent higher.

"While we do not have evidence that the respondents profited from the transaction, we do not have clear and convincing evidence that they did not purchase these medicines and other medical supplies at the lowest possible cost. There was, therefore, a case of overpricing," the Ombudsman's resolution said.



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ROUNDUP

Town employees get Ramadan bonus

COTABATO CITY—The municipal government of Datu Odin Sinsuat in Maguindanao distributed to its employees some 350 sacks of rice as part of the observance of the month-long Ramadan. Mayor Lester Sinsuat said the food provision was his administration's yearly "Ramadan Bonus" not only to Muslims but non-Muslim personnel at the municipal hall. The 50-kilo bag of rice for each employee "will be a big daily food sustenance for Muslim recipients when they break their Ramadan fast at sunset," Sinsuat said. ***Charlie C. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao***

Murder suspect killed

LUCENA CITY—A suspected criminal long wanted for murder and highway robbery in Quezon and Camarines Sur was killed when he allegedly tried to escape from his arresting officers in Tagkawayan, Quezon on Saturday. A police report said Michael Tolentino, 28, and Nelson Bolanlayos, 35, both alleged members of the Bonnet Gang robbery gang, were being brought back to the police station after their arrest when the former told his escort that he wanted to urinate. While the suspect and his escort were taking a leak, Tolentino allegedly grabbed his escort's service firearm. In the scuffle, the gun allegedly went off, hitting Tolentino in the breast. The wounded suspect was rushed to a hospital where he was pronounced dead on arrival. ***Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon***

No more brownouts in Lipa villages

LIPA CITY—The Batangas Electric Cooperative II (Batelec II) has assured its consumers that they would no longer experience weekly brownouts after the company replaced old electric lines and built more power substations connecting to SM City in Lipa. Earlier this year, mall operator SM Primeholders Inc. requested Batelec II to rehabilitate the old lines and construct a substation to supply the mall's electricity load. The mall opened on Sept. 22. The project resulted in weekly scheduled brownouts along the power lines of Barangays Marauoy and Sabang in Lipa and Balete town last month. Zaida Masangkay, head of Batelec's member consumer services and public relations division, said the cooperative had finished a 20-megavolt-ampere substation in Barangay San Carlos to supply the mall's power load. ***Marlon Alexander Luistro, Inquirer Southern Luzon***

Mindoro quadruplets die

CITY OF CALAPAN—The quadruplets, all boys, who were born on Sept. 21, died the following day at the Oriental Mindoro Provincial Hospital here despite efforts of doctors to save them. Dr. Patricia Caballero-Cabral, resident pediatrician, said the boys were born premature and were very weak. The first boy was born in their house in Puerto Galera. The assisting midwife brought the mother, Madonna Roa, 27, who was bleeding, to the hospital where the other babies were born. Since the hospital had no neonatal specialist and only one incubator was working, Cabral said the hospital management offered treatment in Manila but the mother refused as she could not afford the extra expenses despite the hospital's promise to help. "This is an unusual case," Cabral said. She appealed to mothers to have a prenatal checkup upon pregnancy. ***Madonna T. Virola, Inquirer Southern Luzon***

'Team Iwas Dengue' campaign

RECOGNIZING that dengue can only be effectively prevented with sustained community efforts, a multinational company yesterday launched an intensified campaign to promote the active participation of households and communities in eradicating the viral disease. Dubbed "Team Iwas Dengue," the holistic education program of Baygon Mosquito Killer and OFF! Insect Repellent will be carried out in known dengue hot spots, particularly schools, in consultation with the Department of Health and local health officers. It involves community discussions, distribution of education materials, and use of the company's products, according to a press statement. Now on its eighth year, the campaign has reached over 700,000 families in over 3,000 barangays nationwide.

Justices question Cha-cha signatures

From page A1

questioning that generally showed distrust in the initiative mode of changing the 19-year-old Constitution.

"Will you entrust the fate of our country, the Filipino people, in the hands of 6.3 million voters who you and I do not know?" Gutierrez asked Solicitor General Antonio Eduardo Nachura.

Gutierrez fired off the question after Nachura admitted to not having examined the names of the millions of signatories whom Sigaw claimed supported the initiative.

Gutierrez also twitted the petitioners for saying the initiative represented the "voice of God."

"I cannot hear the voice of God right now," she said.

Do they understand?

Gutierrez questioned whether those who had affixed their signatures understood what they were signing "or whether their signatures are genuine."

"I have six relatives in Batangas who were asked to sign what they did not know about ... Well, this process is very doubtful ... If you do not believe me, then that's your problem," she said.

Nachura said that sometimes—especially during elections—they had to trust people they did not know.

The people, not the system

His answer prompted Gutierrez to ask Nachura, a former congressman, whether he had voted for someone he did not know.

When Nachura answered yes, Gutierrez said that Nachura at least must have known the names and general ages of the candidates.

She asked Nachura what it was that he found wrong with the Constitution, and pointed out that maybe it was not the Charter that should be changed but the people who ran the system.

Gutierrez noted that Nachura himself had filed bills in 1999 and 2001 providing for an enabling law for the implementation of a people's initiative form of amending the Constitution.

Sharing of powers

She said the fact that none of the bills were approved showed that the congressmen could be against it.

The petitioners had asked the high court to reverse a recent decision by the Commission on Elections dismissing Sigaw's petition to rewrite the Constitution.

They claimed they had collected more than enough verified signatures calling for a plebiscite on constitutional revisions.

Under the plan, the President and the prime minister will share power for three years. After 2010, the prime minister will be the head of government.

The petition in effect was asking the high tribunal to overturn its 1997 ruling which rejected another move to change the Charter through a people's initiative on grounds of the absence of an enabling law allowing such an undertaking.

Critics say the move is an attempt by Ms Arroyo to hide her administration's shortcomings, frustrate moves in Congress to impeach her, and enable her to stay in power after 2010, when she finishes her term as President.

Like an old wife

Gutierrez took issue with Sigaw and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap) for coming out with advertisements comparing the 1987 Constitution to an old car and an old typewriter, which should be replaced.

"Time will come when the Constitution will be compared with an old wife who should be substituted (for) a young mistress," she said.

She advised Sigaw and Ulap to look at the United States which she said had a good and stable government with an old Constitution.

She also took a shot at the petitioners for portraying Charter change as a cure-all for the country's ills, noting that beggars would not likely disappear from the streets or the homeless would get roofs over their heads if the Constitution was changed.

This forced Nachura to admit: "Changes in the Constitution—whatever they may be—will not bring a better life for all."

Coup in Thailand

He also conceded that people should first change, but to do so, the "structure" of government should be changed.

But this only got Gutierrez to remind him that while Thailand had a parliamentary form of government, it recently experienced a coup.

She also took a jab at Sigaw spokesperson Raul Lambino for admitting that local government officials had played a key role in gathering the signatures.

The people's initiative should then be called "government's initiative," Gutierrez said.

The barrage of questions from Gutierrez came to a halt when a power blackout lasting more than 30 minutes hit the court building while she was grilling Nachura. This forced the justices to retreat to their offices.

Puno draws blood

Associate Justice Reynato Puno, the first to interpellate the petitioners represented by Nachura and former Comelec Chair Bernardo Pardo, drew first blood when he pointed out that the proposition for a shift to a parliamentary government was written in English, which is not understood by many people.

Puno raised doubts the "import" of amending the Constitution was fully explained to the people.

Lambino said his group and the local executives had explained the matter to the people in Filipino and the local dialects.

Puno also questioned whether a system had been adopted to verify the names of the signatories and "verify the authenticity of the signatures."

Lambino said this was adopted in San Juan and Makati, but he could not say for sure if this was carried out all over the country.

Emasculating the courts

Associate Justice Leonardo Quisumbing expressed fears about proposals for a new parliament to pass a law stripping the courts of their extraordinary certiorari powers.

Associate Justice Antonio Carpio, for his part, pointed out that a parliament could not amend the rules of court by ordinary laws. He also questioned how the petitioners got 6.3 million signatures when Lambino had admitted having printed only 1 million signature forms.

Other justices who raised questions on the manner and circumstances by which the signatures were gathered and/or the impact of a parliamentary government on the country were Panganiban, Alicia Martinez, Romeo Callejo Sr., Adolfo Azcuna, Cancio Garcia, Dante Tinga, Presbitero Velasco Jr. and Conchita Morales.

Charter change advocates argued the Comelec had a constitutional duty to set the date of the plebiscite on the proposed amendments.

They argued that under the Constitution, "amendments may be directly proposed by the people through an initiative upon a petition of at least 12 percent of the total number of registered voters."

After nine hours, the SC ordered all parties to submit their memoranda in 15 days and the case shall be deemed submitted for resolution. *With a report from Reuters*

WHAT WENT BEFORE

THE PEOPLE'S INITIATIVE IS ONE of the modes of amending the Constitution allowed by Article XVII of the Constitution. It involves a signature campaign signed by at least 12 percent of the total number of registered voters nationwide, with every legislative district represented by at least 3 percent of the registered voters in that area.

(The other modes of amending the Constitution are through a constitutional convention and through Congress, upon a vote of three-fourths of all its members.)

On Aug. 31 this year, the Commission on Elections junked the petition for a people's initiative, citing a 1997 Supreme Court decision, which said that there is no enabling law on a people's initiative to amend the Constitution.

The decision also said that Republic Act No. 6735, also known as the Initiative and Referendum Act, was "incomplete, inadequate, or wanting in essential terms and conditions insofar as initiative on amendments to the Constitution is concerned."

Pirma

In 1996, the People's Initiative for Reforms, Modernization and Action (Pirma) was formed. The group sought to amend the Constitution, and lift the term limits of elected officials, including then President Fidel Ramos.

The Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order on Pirma's signature drive in December 1996. It also barred the Comelec from hearing petitions lifting term limits through a people's initiative.

In March 1997, the tribunal ruled that there was no enabling law on a people's initiative. Despite Pirma's subsequent appeals, the high court dismissed them with finality in October that year. *Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research*

Erap: It's nothing but a GMA initiative

By Norman Bordadora

DEPOSED PRESIDENT JOSEPH Estrada yesterday dismissed the petition for a people's initiative to change the Constitution as a "Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo initiative."

In a statement from his estate in Tanay, Rizal, where he is detained, Estrada also took to task Solicitor General Eduardo Nachura for defending the initiative before the Supreme Court when he should have been defending the Commission on Elections' decision to junk it.

Estrada referred to the initiative as "this farce."

"It is, from beginning to end, a Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo initiative," he said in the statement prepared for yesterday's oral arguments before the SC.

Estrada had asked the Sandiganbayan to allow him to participate in the hearing but was turned down.

The Sandiganbayan said an order from the SC directing Estrada to attend was required.

In his statement, Estrada took the opportunity to criticize the SC for its role in his ouster from power in 2001, "when I was unconstitutionally removed from the Presidency through a judicially assisted coup."

He, however, expressed the hope the SC would make the right decision on the legality of the people's initiative.

"I continue to hope that, despite past mistakes, the Court will finally find the courage to reject what is patently wrong and unacceptable, affirm what is right and just, and give to our people that which is their due," he said.

Palparan tells Melo body: Just propaganda

From page A1

Inside the building, security men in plainclothes checked the stairways with a bomb-sniffing dog.

Palparan, whom the communist New People's Army had dubbed a "dead man walking," laughed off suggestions by reporters that he was wearing a bulletproof vest.

But after giving his deposition, he sneaked out of the IBP building through the back door, leaving his security convoy in the parking area.

'Positive' results

Palparan said that despite media reports the killings may have been perpetrated by military personnel, he did not see a need to conduct investigations because the results were "positive" in the areas where he had been stationed.

"When you go there now, the people are now cooperative. They are happy. It's positive. So for me, there is no need for [investigations]," he said.

Palparan said that among the generals involved in counterinsurgency operations, he stood out because "I'm outspoken, I'm vocal against the [communist] movement."

"They (other generals) are silent workers; I am not so silent," he said.

Asked about the reported high incidence of extrajudicial killings in areas where he had been assigned, Palparan said the number of killings was higher before he was posted in Mindoro, where he served as a brigade commander from 2001 to 2003.

But retired Supreme Court Justice Jose Melo—head of the commission formed by President Macapagal-Arroyo to investigate the hundreds of extrajudicial killings and disappearances since she took office in 2001—appeared unconvinced.

"Do you have figures to validate this?" Melo asked.

Palparan assured the retired justice that he would ask the Armed Forces to submit documents to back his claim.

The human rights group Karapatan says more than 700 leftist activists, farmers, students, community organizers and journalists have been killed since Ms Arroyo came to power.

General, not specific

The London-based Amnesty International has said at least 51 were killed in the first six months of this year.

Karapatan says more than 130 activists have been killed since 2002 in areas where Palparan was stationed.

While in an earlier statement he had categorically described leftist groups as communist fronts and enemies of the state, Palparan yesterday back-pedaled on his remarks.

"I just want to be general. I don't want to specify. If there is a specific situation, then I may do that. But I don't really want to make specific mention of these organizations. Anyway, it is public knowledge to you and to all of us what's happening in this country," he said.

Palparan also took pains to explain his statement, *"Kung masama ka, dapat mawala ka,"* which the Melo Commission took to mean that communists were evil people and should be eliminated.

He said the statement was his way of countering purported communist deception and threats on the civilian population.

"I am telling the people *na ang taong takot sa masasama ay masama din kasi sumusunod sila* (that those who are afraid of evil people are just as evil because they heed the evil people)," he said, adding:

"I just want to invite public attention and to instill in [the people's] minds that they should not be afraid of threats and propaganda. *Dapat iwasan nila ang magpaloko at matakot, kaya dapat mawala ang masasama* (They should not be deceived or afraid, which is why the evil people should be eliminated)."

'My soldiers are clean'

In his own deposition before the Melo Commission last week, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon said Palparan had been cleared of rights abuses by the military.

Ms Arroyo heaped praise on Palparan during her State of the Nation Address in July, and Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita had said he would be given an appropriate senior post in the government.

"It's not my policy to engage in illegal activities. I don't know of any of my soldiers engaged in killing. I am sure my soldiers are clean," Palparan told the commission.

He also denied encouraging vigilantes or local farmers to take on leftist activists.

But he added: "The majority of people who want peace must be empowered. They have to defend themselves if attacked. They have to avoid getting deceived, fight if necessary.

"I want communism totally erased. But there are a number of ways to erase communism."

Asked if one way was to kill activists, Palparan said: "For armed groups, yes. They are killing people, so we have to put a stop to that."

Later, Palparan told the INQUIRER that despite unflattering media reports, he had no complaints.

"Some hit me, some were OK, but overall, the media have been fair. You cannot quarrel with issues," he said. *With a Reuters report*

Initiative should be slain on sight—Miriam

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

SEN. MIRIAM DEFENSOR-Santiago yesterday predicted the Supreme Court would dismiss for being unconstitutional the petition to change the Constitution through a people's initiative.

Santiago, who won an SC decision against a people's initiative in 1997, said the current initiative filed was a "patent illegality which, when it rears its ugly head, should be slain on sight."

"The people's initiative advocates are long on enthusiasm but short on law. They are also very economical with the legal truth," Santiago said.

She said the people's initiative was illegal on three grounds—it defies legal precedent, it constitutes a revision and not an amendment of the Charter, and it has no budget.

Santiago said the first fatal flaw was that it defied the SC ruling based on the absence of an enabling law from Congress.

She said a split vote in the SC, such as in 1997, was not a ground for overturning a precedent.

Santiago said she wanted to personally argue in the SC against the initiative but could not because of her illness.

Santiago had an endoscopy on Monday and is scheduled to have a CAT scan because of anorexia caused by an ulcer.

Baguio City Rep. Mauricio Domogan, vice chair of the House committee on constitutional amendments, said he believed the SC would give weight to the constitutional doctrine that "the sovereignty of the country and its government reside in its people." *With a report from Michael Lim Ubac*

RP gaining in fight vs graft, says graftbuster

From page A1

sioner of Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption, was referring to the fact that government agencies only started to implement the Integrity Development Action Plan (Idap), which contains 22 measures to prevent corruption on their premises, in January 2005.

Kwok couldn't help but joke about the World Bank report on governance, particularly on political stability.

He said the political stability index showed that "Thailand fared much better than the Philippines."

"But look at what happened last week," he said in reference to the coup staged by the Thai military that toppled Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

On the World Bank report that showed the Philippines faltering in its drive against corruption over the past eight years, Kwok said the media focused on the fact that the country ranked 50.8 percent in 1998 in the control of corruption benchmark but slid down to 37.4 percent in 2005.

The country's percentile rank means that it is better off than only 37.4 percent of the 209 countries covered by the study based on the index for control of corruption. The World Bank defines corruption as the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including petty and grand forms of corruption and the "capture" of the state by elite and private interests.

Election year

Kwok noted that the country's rank over the 8-year period was the highest in 1998, an election year when Joseph Estrada came to power and made a lot of noise about fighting corruption.

"I think it raised hopes, a new hope for the people and hence the figure is high because of the perception of the people," he said. "So in 2000, from 50.5 it dropped to 36.8 because people got disoriented with the government effort."

Kwok also noted that the Philippines posted its second highest rank in the anticorruption benchmark at 42.2 percent in 2003, a year before another election. President Macapagal-Arroyo had taken office by then and had intensified the campaign to fight corruption.

Kwok said the ranking of the Philippines last year, its third highest level, indicated that corruption was still a serious problem. "But (there's) no evidence that the corruption problem is deteriorating," he said.

BIR collection

He said high revenue collection was one indication that the government was succeeding in its anticorruption drive.

Because of corruption, government suffers and its revenues go down, he said. "(B)ut look at the performance of the Bureau of Customs and the Bureau of Internal Revenue this year. They have record revenue collections. So these are more objective figures.

"Do you think they can collect more revenues if they are getting more corrupt?" he said.

"Quite unlikely, isn't it. The fact that they collect more revenue may mean there's probably less corruption," Kwok said.

Declining poverty incidence

He said declining poverty incidence was another indication that the government's anticorruption drive was making headway.

Five years ago, Kwok said, there were 12 million Filipinos living in poverty but now this was down to 9 million.

"This is how I would as an international consultant look at this kind of effort," he said.

"I tend to agree that through the (perception) index you prove the Philippines has a corruption problem but let's not overdo its interpretation," he said.

Surveys

He said surveys were only "indicators" of the level of corruption because they involved perceptions of people, who get their ideas mainly from the media.

Kwok cited a poll by Social Weather Stations that found that only one of every eight Filipinos experienced corruption. But when people were asked what they thought about corruption in the country, 80 percent said it was serious, Kwok said.

"So it doesn't correlate because you don't have any experience (with corruption) and yet you say it's serious," he said.

Asked about the best way to gauge government efforts to curb corruption, Kwok said: "Don't look at one single survey. You look at multiple surveys and you also look at the facts... and figures."

He said the high number of complaints against corruption did not mean that corruption had worsened. It indicates that people are confident in reporting corruption, according to Kwok.

"Look at how many people were prosecuted, charged, dismiss(ed) and the number of big fishes who were convicted," he said.

Kwok acknowledged that based on results of certain surveys, corruption in the country was "still serious."

"But its not getting worse. Actually, it's getting a little bit better," he said as he pointed to an SWS survey that found that the number of companies paying bribes for public contracts was going down.

In 2003, 57 percent of companies in Metro Manila covered by the survey said that they had paid bribes, but this year the figure was down to 46 percent. "It's still high but at least it's going down," Kwok said.

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Red purge victims' kin find closure

From page A1

Their unmarked graves were some 50 meters from each other in the mountains of Barangay Bonbon in Cebu City. Apparently, they were victims of the purge within the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) in 1985.

When the couple were taken and killed, no arrangements were made for their son Herlo, who was left in the care of their laundrywoman.

Although he grew up with an impoverished squatter family in Mandaue, Herlo earned athletic scholarships and was about to graduate with a degree in education when he was shot to death in a fraternity war last year. He met his end just like his parents—the object of a senseless and irrational rage.

Luz and Herculano Laguna were among thousands of cadres and members of the underground movement suspected of being "deep penetration agents" (DPAs) of the military. In a series of purges in the 1980s, the suspected DPAs were arrested and detained. Many were tortured, a practice supposedly forbidden in the communist movement. Hundreds, if not thousands, were executed.

The CPP, which is waging a "people's war," Asia's longest communist insurgency, later admitted the purges were grievous mistakes and vowed never again to commit them. But by then, many had died and the children left behind, a number of them, forgotten.

Trade union cadres

Those who knew them say the Laguna couple belonged to a group of 13 trade union cadres who in 1984 had been transferred to Cebu from Mindanao, which was then in the throes of an anti-DPA campaign called Kampanyang Ahos. (*Ahos* is Cebuano for garlic, which in Philippine folklore is a potent weapon in warding off *aswang* [witch or viscera sucker]).

Suspicion fell on the 13 who were then executed around the same time. The remains of only five of the 13 have so far been exhumed and recovered.

"I pity them. They were only fighting for change in our society," said a tearful Aling Cion who, with her sister Lita Longanilla, spent a week in a campsite in Bonbon, waiting as forensic experts carefully retrieved every shard of bone from the unmarked graves.

Forensic anthropologist Jerome Bailen presided over the exhumation, making sure his team recovered every bit of detail needed to reconstruct what he called a "forensic narrative" that would reveal how the Laguna couple died.

"We have to individualize what we are doing. These are not mass graves exhumed like *kamote* (sweet potato) diggings, and laid down on anything helter-skelter. We need all the information to build up a case," said Bailen, a professor at the University of the Philippines.

Healing and justice

The exhumation was organized by the Peace Advocates for Truth, Healing and Justice (PATH), itself composed mainly of former members of the communist movement who were arrested and tortured during the purges.

PATH chair Gil Navarro said his group's work was different from the exhumations being done by the military, which has its own agenda.

PATH's main objective is to "look for and identify the remains of those executed in the purges and return them to relatives still searching up to now," Navarro said. Through informants, PATH locates the sites where purge victims are believed to be buried—a complicated, risky and tedious task.

Come clean

PATH wants the CPP to once and for all come clean on what happened, reveal exactly how many people were arrested and killed, and help in exhuming and retrieving the remains. But such a demand would not be easy to meet.

As far as the Left is concerned, the purges are a thing of the past, errors for which the CPP has already apologized and atoned for.

"What I know is that for the most part, the purges were declared to be errors because torture was used. Torture is prohibited in the movement. So what happened is that there were victims who were actually innocent," said Rep. Satur Ocampo, former spokesperson of the National Democratic Front and now Bayan Muna party-list representative.

Paranoia

Ocampo added that the CPP Politburo resolved in the late 1980s to reach out to the victims and their families, apologize and offer compensation. Ocampo, however, could not say for certain exactly how many victims were covered by this act of contrition.

It is difficult to account for everyone who died when the CPP cleansed its ranks of suspected spies. For one, many were known only by assumed names or aliases.

In other cases, said human rights advocate Ramon Casiple, the executioners themselves became victims as paranoia spread and suspicion implicated even those who were doing the purging.

More than anything else, the use of torture was the major error during the purge. Ocampo, himself heavily tortured by the military in the 1970s, knows that information obtained through torture is unreliable. Yet the CPP used it to extract information from suspected spies.

"The logic of self-implication and the pressure to implicate others were the reasons so many were arrested and investigated during the purge. It was done to ease the pain of torture and many innocent comrades were implicated," Ocampo said.

Polka dot blouse

More than 20 years later, the signs of torture were still evident on the remains of Luz Aniasco Laguna. Aling Cion fainted at the sight: Hands tied behind Luz's back, ankle and wrist bones bound with blue nylon rope, a strip of denim cloth positioned somewhere near her mouth and neck and, worse, an 18-kilo boulder over her cracked skull. .

Aling Cion said she recognized her sister Luz: She knew so well the polka dot blouse that covered Luz's remains. That blouse, now faded, had a gash apparently made by a bladed weapon over her left breast. Aling Cion's physical description of Luz also matched what the forensic experts were able to reconstruct.

But it was a different story altogether for what were believed to be the remains of Herculano, known to friends as Lando or Lani. Bailen and company had no physical description of him or any photos available, making the process of reconstruction and verification more difficult.

Hope

For now, Aling Cion has no choice but to wait as Bailen's team finishes its analysis before scheduling a proper wake and burial for her sister and brother-in-law.

Despite the pain, however, Aling Cion took home with her one piece of good news from Cebu. Although Luz, Herculano and Herlo are gone, their line continues with 10-month-old Aaron Heaven, the boy Herlo sired before he was shot in March 2005. Aling Cion can only hope that Aaron Heaven will be spared the tragic fate that befell his father and grandparents.

Cruel ...

From page A1

Commission on Lottery has called off the sale of Speet-to-2000 instant scratch-and-win tickets after printing errors resulted in the circulation of more than 10 first-prize tickets instead of the regular four, a spokesperson for the Office for Government Policy Coordination said.

"We suspect that errors might have occurred when the printers were transmitting tickets—producing data to the printing system," the spokesperson said.

Commission officials said it was not legally obliged to pay out on any of the six misprinted tickets.

Provisions printed on the back of the tickets stipulate no payout unless coded numbers shared by the issuer, the bank and the printer match.

One of the four authentic winning tickets has been presented to the commission and scooped $1 million.

Printing errors affected some 7,000 of the 20 million tickets printed in the last six months and about 90 percent of the tickets had been recovered, the commission said.

The Speetto-2000 lottery has earned $37 million this year, with one ticket selling at 2,000 won ($2.1). Proceeds go to welfare projects. *AFP*

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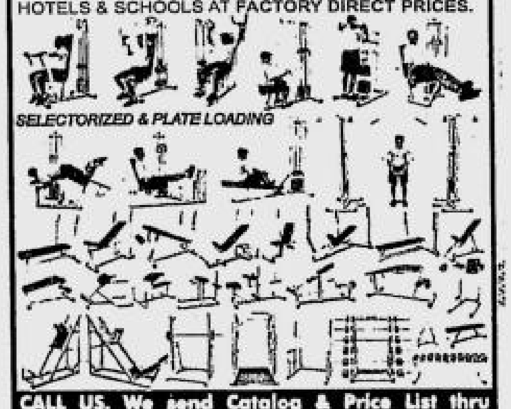

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Freeze of Erap assets eyed

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG IS MULLING THE possibility of freezing the assets of jailed President Joseph Estrada to prevent him from further financing destabilization attempts against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor told the INQUIRER: "We have received information that former President Estrada's assets that have not been frozen by Sandiganbayan may be used against the administration."

Defensor said Estrada could gain more access to his assets and fund more illicit attempts to topple the Arroyo government if the Sandiganbayan, which is trying the fallen leader for plunder, releases him from his Tanay resthouse where he has been jailed since being ousted from power in 2001.

Malacañang officials have openly blamed Estrada for the series of destabilization acts against the President, from the massive rallies to the anti-Arroyo media campaigns to failed coup attempts, but they have also failed to show evidence proving these allegations.

Defensor had previously bared Estrada's donation of a substantial amount to a foundation for the family of Magdalo soldiers, but the ousted leader has denied anything sinister about this so-called Christmas gift.

Defensor said Malacañang's legal team was currently reviewing the possibility of locking up Estrada's assets that were not frozen in 2001.

INQUIRER Research showed that among the assets ordered frozen by the Sandiganbayan four years ago were a house and lot in Corinthian Gardens owned by Charlie "Atong" Ang, another house and lot in Barangay Pasong Tamo in Quezon City under the name of Yolanda Ricaforte, deposits totaling P11.3 million in six branches of Equitable-PCIBank, P201.4 million in funds of the Muslim Youth Foundation, and shares of Waterfront Philippines Inc. and Wellex Industries Inc.

Palace ignoring NBI bid to charge Fraport officials

By Gil C. Cabacungan and Nikko Dizon

MALACAÑANG HAS DECIDED TO IGNORE A National Bureau of Investigation recommendation to file criminal charges against German airport operator Fraport for violations of the Anti-Dummy Law.

Fraport, a partner in the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. consortium that built the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3, violated the law when it took majority control of Piatco, the NBI said.

The NBI has recommended that the Department of Justice file criminal charges against Fraport executives for breaching the 40-percent equity limit on foreign ownership of public utilities.

Records showed that the German airport operator owned as much as 61.4 percent of Piatco, it said.

"The NBI findings and its recommendations on this anti-dummy case are separate and distinct from the legal issues between the government and Piatco's that have already been resolved by the court ruling on Naia 3," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

"The government has already complied with the court's compensation order and the government's objective is to expedite the opening of Naia 3. It is about time that the people benefit from this facility," Bunye said.

The government has already paid the P3-billion initial compensation to Piatco pending the final determination of what would be a "just and fair" valuation of the facility.

Malacañang is apparently careful about not straining ties with Germany so soon after President Macapagal-Arroyo met with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on the sidelines of the Asia-Europe Meeting in Helsinki, Finland earlier this month.

In that brief encounter, the President assured Merkel that the Philippines would reimburse Fraport for its Naia 3 investments.

Fraport's legal troubles over its investments in Naia 3 have long been an irritant in Philippine-German relations especially after the Supreme Court voided Piatco's contract and allowed the government to take over the facility.

Fraport demanded that it be paid $425 million as compensation for its investment and brought its case to the World Bank's International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) in Washington D.C.

Piatco brought a separate compensation suit before the Singapore-based International Chamber of Commerce. In late August, the ICC handed down a decision ordering the Philippine government to return the facility to Piatco for failing to pay just compensation.

It recognized earlier rulings by the Supreme Court and the Pasay City court that the government could not take over Terminal 3 without first making the P3-billion initial payment.

Piatco yesterday said it had not violated the Anti-Dummy Law and was banking on the "sympathy" of the courts.

"We are confident that the courts will look at the case with sympathy because we haven't committed any violations," said Piatco lawyer Moises Tolentino in a phone interview.

Tolentino said the consortium had been cleared of any violations of the Anti-Dummy Law by congressional committees that probed the issue.

Jusmag land could be worth ₱17.7B for AFP

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE RECENT SUPREME COURT DECISION confirming the Bases Conversion Development Authority as the owner of the 35.5-hectare Jusmag property in Fort Bonifacio will boost the Armed Forces of the Philippines modernization program as the agency can now proceed with privatization.

According to BCDA vice president Aileen Zosa, the property which is still raw land could fetch at least P17.7 billion when developed.

But Zosa said BCDA would only start developing the area after it gets the final and executory decision from the Supreme Court and after the formal turnover of the property by the Armed Forces to BCDA.

In a telephone interview, she explained that BCDA would enter into a joint-venture partnership with a private firm to develop the land, the cost of which would be deducted from proceeds of the eventual sale.

BCDA would put in the land while a private developer would replicate (or provide another site for) the AFP facilities and develop the area, she said.

"The manner of sharing the proceeds would depend on talks with whomever the partner would be," Zosa said, "but BCDA expects its share to be around P4 billion."

By law, the AFP modernization program would get 35 percent of the government's share of the proceeds.

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LIBAN ROGER CARPIO

Ex-solon charged with theft

Unauthorized bank withdrawals total P11M

By DJ Yap

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL RED CROSS has charged former Quezon City Rep. Dante Liban—the chair of the organization's Quezon City chapter—for allegedly withdrawing P11 million from the chapter's bank account and carting away P300,000 in cash donations.

In three separate complaints filed at the Quezon City prosecutor's office on Monday, PNRC-QC chapter administrator Annie Domingo Torres charged Liban with robbery, theft and estafa through false pretenses or deceit.

But Liban quickly denied the charges, saying he only transferred the cash funds of PNRC-QC from its original bank to another, an action authorized by its board of directors.

"There was no robbery, no theft, and no estafa since we only transferred the money from Bank of the Philippine Islands in Diliman to a Metrobank branch in Cubao," he said in an interview.

'Fabricated, baseless'

He added that the charges were "fabricated and baseless," considering that the PNRC-QC board had ratified his actions on Sept. 23.

Charged along with Liban for estafa and robbery were Reynaldo Bernardo, treasurer of PNRC-QC chapter and Junjun Sodario. Jenny Esquillo, a chapter representative of Red Cross Youth, was a co-respondent in the theft charge.

In the estafa complaint, Torres said Liban and Bernardo allegedly misrepresented themselves as the chair and treasurer of the PNRC-QC, respectively, and withdrew P500,000 from the organization's account at the BPI Diliman branch on Aug. 25.

Another withdrawal

On Sept. 15, Liban and Bernardo allegedly made another unauthorized withdrawal, this time, for P10.5 million, Torres added.

She pointed out that the PNRC national chapter recognizes only the signatures of any two members of the QC Interim Board, and not the signatures of Bernardo and Liban, since the latter was expelled from the organization on Aug. 31.

Null and void

Torres claimed that Bernardo and Liban held an election for the PNRC-QC Board of Governors on June 29, without the national chapter's authorization. Torres said the PNRC later declared the election null and void since

EX-SOLON/ A24

Where's the money, Collegian staffers ask

By DJ Yap

STAFFERS OF THE PHILIPPINE COLLEGIAN, the official student publication of the University of the Philippines, criticized university officials yesterday for allegedly paralyzing the paper's operations.

No issues of the Collegian have been published for about a month.

In a move described as a "direct attack on campus press freedom," the release of the paper's publication funds has been blocked by UP officials since August, Collegian editor in chief Karl Castro said.

University officials have insisted that a bidding must first be held for the selection of a printing press for the student publication before any money can be released, he added.

"According to the administration, Collegian funds must be treated as government funds and not as student funds, so the selection of the printing press must comply with the Government Procurement Act," Castro said.

Thus, the UP administration is insisting on a bidding, and "is refusing to recognize the editorial board's autonomy," he added.

Castro, however, said that the law only covers government offices and not student publications.

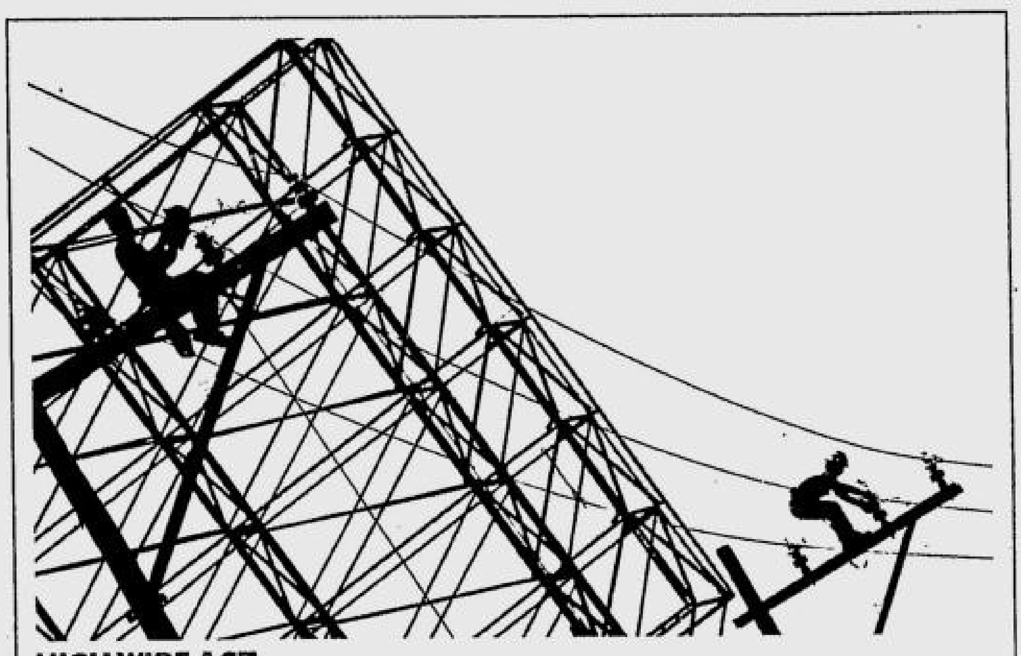
"The Collegian firmly asserts that it is exempt from the Government Procurement Act. It is not a government unit as it is funded only by the students," a position paper prepared by the staff read.

"Moreover, the Campus Journalism Act of 1991 stipulates that the editorial board should facilitate the selection of the publication's printing press," it added.

According to the staffers, the UP administration's sole task "is to collect the publication fee during registration, and thereafter give full discretion of handling of Collegian funds to the duly selected editorial board."

Reached for comment, UP Diliman Chancellor Sergio Cao said in a text message to the INQUIRER that he would give a statement "in a day or two."

The Collegian has a circulation of 15,000 and is distributed to the entire UP system.



HIGH WIRE ACT
Heights can be terrifying for some people but not for workers of the Manila Electric Co., who consider working at high altitudes all in a day's work. EKA NICKMATULHUDA/CONTRIBUTOR

MMDA warns towing companies

By Tarra V. Quismundo

TOW TRUCKS COULD END UP BEING IMpounded by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) if their operators refuse to comply with the agency's long-time policy.

Towing companies are required to get clearance from the MMDA before towing away any vehicle in the metropolis.

"That policy has long been passed by the Metro Manila Council, but its implementation has been lax. Now that we've informed towing companies, as soon as we get a complaint that they did not get our clearance first before towing a vehicle, we will get back at them," said Angelito Vergel de Dios, MMDA Traffic Operations Center (TOC) executive director.

He added that the MMC decided to come up with a regulation covering tow trucks following numerous complaints from motorists.

"When cars are towed, the tendency of car owners is to call the MMDA. If we have a record of towing activities, we can tell car owners where their vehicles were impounded," Vergel de Dios said.

He estimated that around 100 tow trucks operate in Metro Manila. Of the total, 30 are accredited by the MMDA and the rest by local governments. Most tow trucks are operated by government-contracted private firms, as only a few are government-owned.

Companies may register their tow trucks with the TOC office at the MMDA headquarters in Makati City. Operators, on the other hand, can get clearance from the agency before conducting towing operations by calling up the MMDA Metro Base at 882-0860 or the 136 hotline.

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Armed men rob NFA warehouse on agency's anniversary

'Out patient'

A 25-YEAR-OLD woman who lived on the streets with her family gave birth to her fifth child in Malabon City at dawn yesterday. Policeman Rommel Habig said families living beside the park, which was near San Bartolome Church, called them up after hearing a baby crying in the middle of the night. "When we got to the scene, the baby had already been delivered," Habig said. The mother, Margie Mosquite, and her newborn son were immediately brought to the hospital on board their police car, he added. "The mother at first refused to be brought to the hospital because they did not have money," Habig said.

Nancy C. Carvajal

Waterless areas

SOME areas in Malabon, Caloocan and Navotas will have no water for 20 hours, starting at 11 p.m. tomorrow, up to 7 p.m. on Friday. The following areas that will be affected are: Paradise Village (Tonsuya), Damata area (Tonsuya), Letre Road, Gen. P. Borromeo St. (Longos), Barangay Tañong and City Hall in Malabon. In Caloocan, there will be no water in Bisig ng Nayon, Samson Road and Letre Road from T. Bugallon to Sct. Lascano. There will also be low water pressure or no water in Barangays San Agustin and Ibaba in Navotas.

Call for help

FLORITA Santos, a 78-year-old grandmother from Cauayan, Isabela has been diagnosed with cervical cancer, stage two. She needs to undergo chemo and cobalt therapy but she does not have money. Florita also has to undergo blood transfusion in preparation for chemotherapy. She and her family are appealing for help from kindhearted readers who would like to donate blood or funds for her therapy. Florita can be contacted through her daughter, Estrellita Amores, at 9296831. Donations can also be deposited in the account of her granddaughter, Marites Sawit Duran, at any Equitable-PCI Bank branch (account no. 125-9060-130).

By Jocelyn R. Uy

AS THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) marked its 34th anniversary yesterday, robbers broke into one of its warehouses in Taguig City and made off with a still undermined amount of money.

Case investigator PO3 Ehron Balauat said in his police report that seven armed men barged into the NFA South District Office warehouse on DBP Avenue, FTI Complex at around 1:45 a.m. yesterday.

According to security guards, a black sports utility vehicle stopped in front of the facility and the men on board ordered them to open the gates.

"Apparently, the guards thought the robbers were police officers because they carried long firearms and wore black jackets that bore police insignias," Taguig police chief Supt. Alfred Corpus told the INQUIRER.

Upon entering the warehouse, the armed men disarmed the guards, tied them up and locked them inside a toilet.

The robbers then forced open the doors of the cashier and marketing offices.

"We still cannot say how much the NFA lost to the robbers as the inventory is still ongoing," Corpus said.

The guards, upon reviewing their logbook, said that a large amount of cash could have been taken by the robbers as the armored van, which usually picks up the warehouse's daily earnings, did not drop by on Monday.

Ex-solon charged with theft

From page A23

the respondents allegedly refused to comply with the organization's by-laws.

In the robbery charge, Torres accused Bernardo and Sodario of forcibly opening her office at the Quezon City Hall compound on Sept. 18, and taking 64 bags and 89 cans containing donations collected at Metro Rail Transit stations.

P300,000 in cash missing

According to the complainant, the bags and cans contained P300,000 in cash.

Esquillo, on the other hand, was accused of stealing a central processing unit from Torres' office on Sept. 18, allegedly upon Liban's orders.

Chapter's money

But Liban maintained that the "PNRC-QC chapter's money is the chapter's money and not the PNRC's (its mother organization)."

"PNRC is claiming all money of the Red Cross chapters is their money ... which we don't believe," he said."

He added that although the PNRC does not recognize the PNRC-QC elections, a Quezon City court had already ruled that the Liban-chaired board of directors was legitimate.

DID YOU KNOW

SEPT. 27: Legarda Street in Manila, formerly known as Calle Alix, was named after Benito Legarda y Tuason, vice president of the Malolos Congress of Emilio Aguinaldo's revolutionary government. Legarda, a lawyer, also became a member of the Philippine Commission in the early 1900s. He was born in Binondo, Manila on Sept. 27, 1853, and died in August 1915. Aguinaldo served as a pallbearer at his funeral.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

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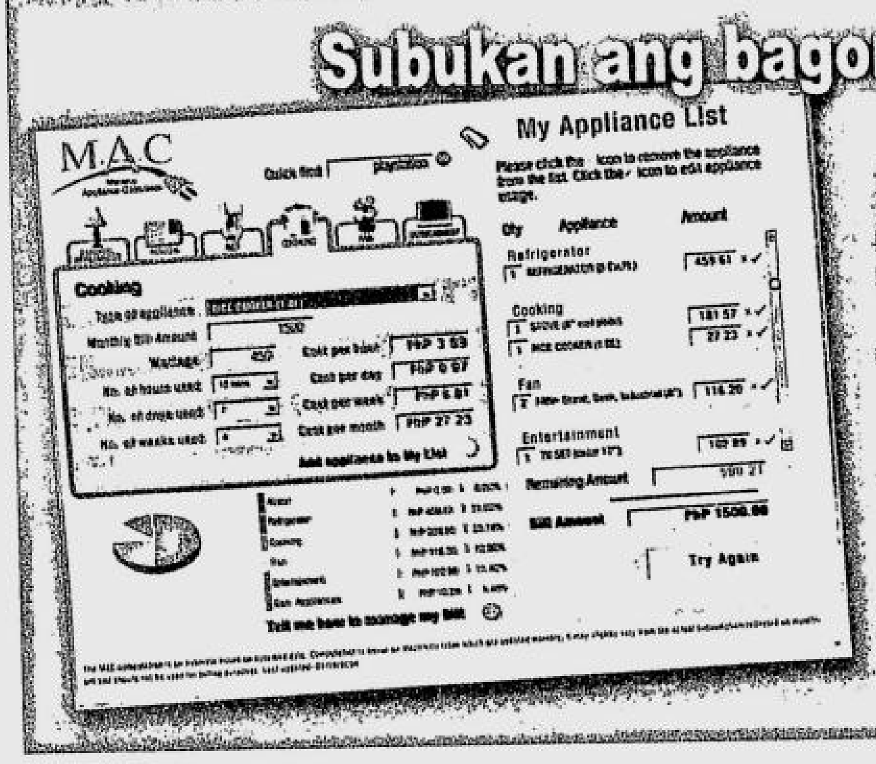

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Key 9/11 planner linked to London blasts—Musharraf

ISLAMABAD—THE CHIEF ARchitect of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks was also linked to last year's suicide blasts on the London transport network, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf says in his memoirs.

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who was arrested in Pakistan in 2003, confessed that al-Qaida sized up London's subway for an attack at the same time as it hatched a plan to crash jets into Heathrow, Musharraf says in "In the Line of Fire."

Another al-Qaida militant tasked by Mohammed to carry out the reconnaissance later revealed a connection to two of the bombers who struck in London on July 7, 2005, the controversial book published on Monday says.

"We had learned from KSM (Mohammed) that al-Qaida's planners were thinking seriously about, and discussing, bombing Heathrow Airport in London … as well as London's subway system," Musharraf writes.

"The suspect had been told by KSM to carry out reconnaissance of, and prepare a plan to attack, Heathrow Airport. After initial planning, he also suggested Canary Wharf and London's subway system as additional possible targets." Mohammed, the self-proclaimed key conspirator behind the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States, has previously been linked to the foiled Heathrow plot but not to the subway attacks.

Musharraf's book says the militant kept in touch with al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden at the time he was planning the British attacks through courier-delivered letters.

After his arrest in the Pakistani city of Rawalpindi he was handed over to the United States. He is reportedly to face a hearing at Guantanamo Bay to determine if he is an "enemy combatant." Musharraf does not name the second militant who scouted the possible London targets but it is believed to be Naeem Noor Khan, a Pakistani computer expert captured in Lahore in mid-2004. His whereabouts are unknown.

Pakistan gave Britain information on the militant's laptop about terror plots as well as "direct access" to Khan, Musharraf says in the book.

"Later this would reveal a link with Siddique Khan and Shehzad Tanweer," two of the young Britons of Pakistani heritage who blew themselves up in London on July 7, 2005, Musharraf says, without specifying when. *AFP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, September 27, 2006
25th Week in Ordinary Time
Vincent de Paul

1st Reading: Pro 30:5-9
Gospel: Luke 9:1-6

Jesus called his twelve disciples and gave them power and authority to drive out all evil spirits and to heal diseases. And he sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. He instructed them, "Don't take anything for the journey, neither walking stick, nor bag, nor bread, nor silver coins; and don't even take a spare tunic. Whatever house you enter, remain there until you leave that place. And wherever they don't welcome you, leave the town and shake the dust from your feet: it will be as a testimony against them."

So they set out and went through the villages, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.

Commentary

The Word of God, in the prophets and in Israel, is the shield of those who take refuge in God. And those who know the word know what is essential: enough bread to eat, to live truthfully, and to honor God. This is the wisdom of those who do not know Jesus, the Word and bread of God in community. Jesus' words are pointed: go lightly with only what you need now, live on the kindness and generosity of others, and leave without saying anything to those who reject you. And go the Way of Jesus preaching and living the good news to the poor in the world, healing and setting the world right. God is with us in Jesus.

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Saddam thrown out of court at genocide trial

SADDAM AP

BAGHDAD—SADDAM HUSSEIN WAS thrown out of court Tuesday for the third time in as many hearings of his genocide trial, prompting a revolt among the defendants and forcing the judge to declare a recess.

"You are a defendant, I am the judge," Judge Mohammed al-Oreibi al-Khalifa said as he ordered Saddam to leave the court room after the ousted Iraqi leader ignored orders to keep silent.

Saddam left the court room smiling. He had been ejected from the past two sessions for similar reasons.

His dismissal angered his six co-defendants, who demanded to leave as well.

"Get Saddam out and put the others back in their seats," the judge ordered the court bailiffs.

Former Iraqi military commander Sultan Hashim Ahmed al-Tai was the most vocal of the defendants, refusing to sit down and continuing to shout and wave his finger at the judge.

"Don't raise your voice at me, you are the defendant," the judge retorted, before also ejecting Hashim from court.

The others then renewed their demands to leave, led by the former deputy of operations for the Iraqi military, Hussein Rashid al-Tikriti, who declared: "This is rude, you should be responsible." Khalifa then announced a one-hour recess.

The trial has been plagued with problems since the Iraqi government's decision to remove former presiding judge Abdallah al-Ameri on the grounds he was too lenient with the defense.

In the following session on Sept. 20, the defense lawyers protested this move and walked out of the proceedings, sparking a protests by defendants who did not want to be represented by court-appointed lawyers.

When Saddam himself loudly contested the change, he was ejected by the judge, a pattern that would repeat itself in the subsequent two sessions.

Khalifah began Tuesday's session with a stern warning to Saddam to behave himself during the trial and not speak out of turn.

"You are a defendant here, you have rights and also obligations. You can defend yourself, question witnesses," said the judge. "And I am ready to allow you, but this is a court, not a political arena.

"By disrespecting the court, you are only damaging your cause," he added.

Saddam then produced a piece of paper, which in the previous session was described as a complaint about the absence of his lawyers at the trial.

The judge only allowed him to read the complaint after turning off the court microphones.

Two witnesses were then heard before the fracas with the defendants sparked the recess.

The first witness described how he served in the Iraqi army, was a prisoner of war in Iran, and then returned to his village in 1990 to find it destroyed and his wife and four children missing.

The witness then angrily recited a Koranic verse, directing it at Saddam. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Bin Laden alive-Arab TV

DUBAI—Dubai-based Al Arabiya television on Tuesday quoted a Taliban official as saying al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden was alive and in good health. The Arabic channel said its Pakistan bureau had received a call from the unnamed Taliban official a few days after a leaked French secret document said Saudi intelligence believed bin Laden died last month in Pakistan. "The official said bin Laden was alive and that reports that he is ill are not true," said Bakr Atyani, Al Arabiya's Islamabad correspondent. "The Taliban checked with members who are close to al-Qaida that these reports are baseless." ***Reuters***

Al-Qaida figure killed

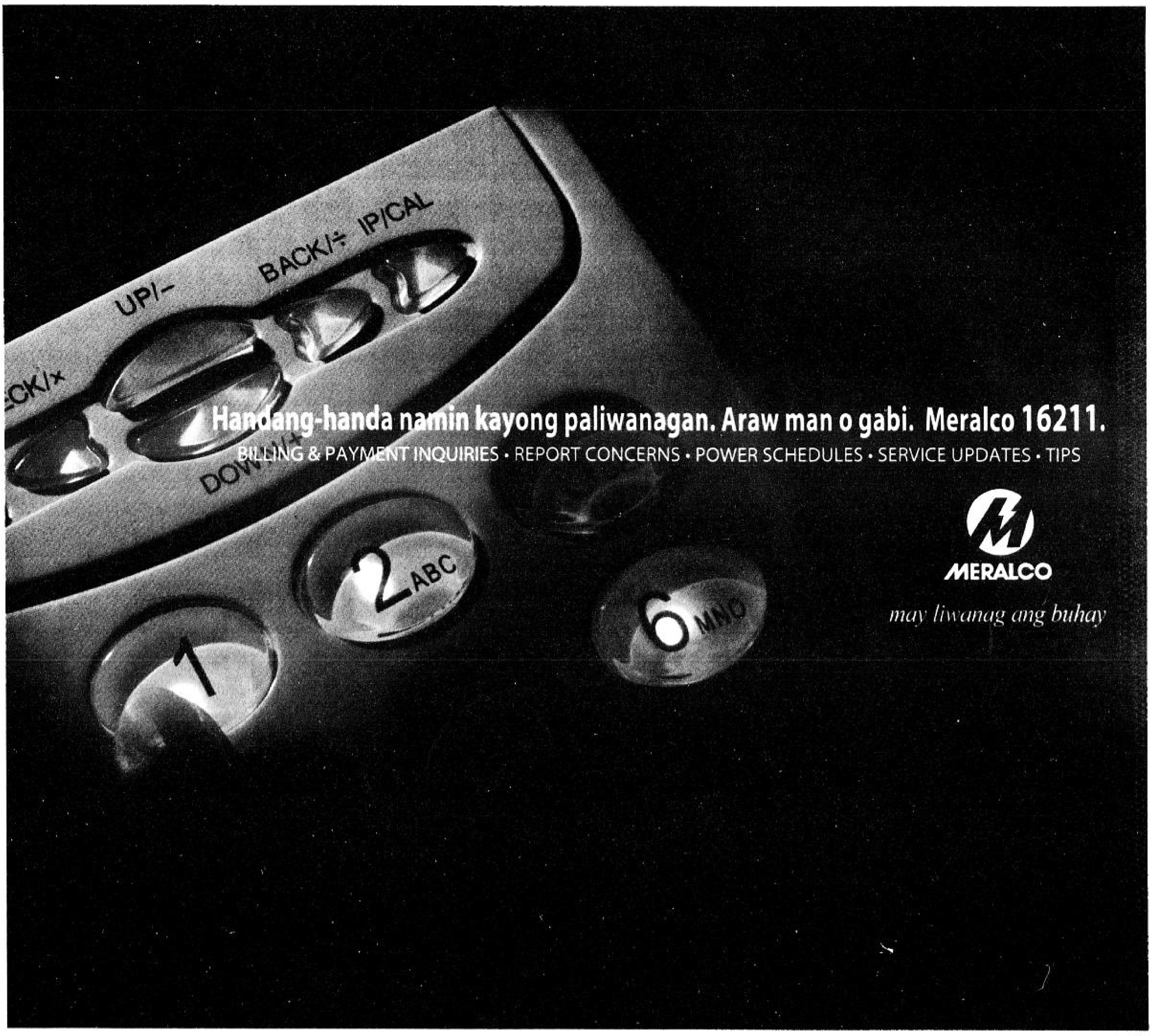
BAGHDAD—A senior al-Qaida operative who engineered a brazen escape from a high-security American prison in Afghanistan last year was killed on Monday in a pre-dawn raid by British soldiers in a quiet, wealthy neighborhood in southern Iraq, an American official and an official in Basra said. About 250 soldiers wearing night-vision goggles and carrying special rifles stormed a house in the Junainah neighborhood of Basra, intending to capture the operative, whom the spokesperson for the British military in Iraq identified as Omar al-Faruq, an Iraqi. They were fired upon as they entered, and shot back, killing Faruq. ***New York Times News Service***

Women's advocate killed

KANDAHAR—Gunmen on motorbikes shot dead a top women's affairs official in Afghanistan in a Taliban-style assassination Monday while US troops and attack helicopters killed 10 rebels. Turbanned men on motorcycles lay in wait for Safia Hama Jan, head of the women's affairs department in insurgency-hit Kandahar province, and opened fire on her as she was leaving for work early Monday, witnesses and officials said. The men fired Kalashnikovs into her car as she was about 150 meters from her home in Kandahar city, they said. Around four bullets struck her head, an AFP correspondent who saw the body said. ***AFP***

China sacks party chief

SHANGHAI—China announced Monday the sacking of Shanghai's top Communist Party leader on major corruption charges, with the move also widely seen as part of a power play by President Hu Jintao. The official Xinhua news agency reported the central government in Beijing had dismissed Chen Liangyu from his post in Shanghai as well as suspending him from the nation's politburo, which is the ruling clique of communist leaders. "The Central Committee has decided … to dismiss comrade Chen Liangyu of his post of party secretary of the Shanghai Committee," Xinhua said, citing a statement from the politburo. ***AFP***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Iraq war fueling extremism, top White House aide admits

GREENWICH, CONNECTICUT—THE WHITE House acknowledged Monday that Iraq was among several factors that "fuel the spread of jihadism," but said that winning the war would dishearten potential terrorists.

Spokesperson Tony Snow sought to challenge news reports on Sunday about the latest National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq and terrorism, which represents the comprehensive consensus findings of the 16 US intelligence agencies.

"It assesses that a variety of factors, in addition to Iraq, fuel the spread of jihadism, including longstanding social grievances, slowness of the pace of reform, and the use of the Internet," he told reporters.

"And it also notes that should jihadists be perceived to have failed in Iraq, fewer will be inspired to carry on the fight," the spokesperson said as US President George W. Bush traveled here for a political fundraiser.

On Sunday, the New York Times quoted an official familiar with the report, entitled Trends in Global Terrorism: Implications for the United States, as saying that "the Iraq war has made the overall terrorism problem worse." Bush has been saying that the war made Americans safer as he campaigns ahead of Nov. 7 legislative elections, in which the unpopular war in Iraq may cost his Republican party control of one or both houses of the US Congress.

The Washington Post said the report described the Iraq conflict as the primary recruiting vehicle for violent Islamic extremists.

While the US has seriously damaged al-Qaida and disrupted its ability to carry out major operations since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington, it noted, radical Islamic networks have spread and decentralized.

"One thing that the reports do not say is that war in Iraq has made terrorism worse," said Snow, who also insisted that the new reports "contain nothing that the president hasn't said." He pointed to the news accounts saying that the NIE concluded that the leadership of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network had been "hit hard" since it carried out the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the United States.

Snow also said the news reports described the NIE as finding that al-Qaida had become more dispersed, with more independent activity, more use of the Internet and a shared "totalitarian ideology" with other terrorist groups. *AFP*

US eases liquid ban on flights

WASHINGTON—US AUTHORITIES Monday eased a ban on liquids in airline passenger carry-on baggage, allowing small toileteries and drinks sold in departure lounges, but said curbs on most items were indefinite.

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) said the "orange" or "high" alert level for aviation would stay in force, and warned liquid explosives were still a terrorist threat despite the failure of the alleged London bomb plot.

From Tuesday, the TSA said, passengers boarding domestic and international flights at US airports can take travel-sized toileteries like shampoo or toothpaste through security in containers smaller than three ounces.

The items must be held in one, clear, one quart-sized zip-top plastic bag.

Passengers will also be permitted to buy items including beverages and duty-free items in new "sterile" areas of the airport after passing through security.

A total ban on liquids, gels and aerosols in hand baggage was imposed in August after Britain foiled an alleged plot by suicide bombers to smuggle volatile chemicals onto trans-Atlantic flights designed to trigger explosions.

Kip Hawley, assistant secretary of the TSA, said the ban on other items, like soft drink cans, bottles of water, and perfumes in larger containers originating from outside airports, would stay in place.

"We are keeping the current arrangements in place for an indefinite period of time," he told reporters at Washington's Ronald Reagan National Airport.

"After the initial total ban, we have learned enough from the UK investigation to say that small travel-sized liquids are safe to bring through security check points in limited numbers," said Hawley. *AFP*

Court OKs class action suit over 'light' cigarettes

NEW YORK—A US FEDERAL judge Monday gave a green light to a class-action lawsuit alleging major tobacco companies deceived consumers into believing "light" cigarettes were safer than other cigarettes.

Judge Jack Weinstein of US District Court in Brooklyn, New York, rejected a motion to dismiss the case, allowing a trial to go forward against Altria unit Philip Morris, RJ Reynolds Tobacco Co. and others.

The ruling opens the door to a potentially massive judgment against cigarette makers, which up to now have managed to avoid major damage awards or win appeals in most of the the suits alleging they should pay for improperly hiding the dangers of tobacco.

The plaintiffs are seeking damages from what they claim was a conspiracy dating back decades to make it appear that "light" or "low tar" cigarettes were safer.

"There is enough merit to both plaintiffs' and defendants' contentions to permit the litigation to go forward," the judge wrote.

"If, as contended by plaintiffs, a huge fraud was perpetrated on tens of millions of people causing them billions of dollars in loss ..., recovery dependent on proof should be allowed."

The judge said there was "considerable merit" to the allegation that most smokers would not have purchased light cigarettes "if they knew they provided no health advantage over regular cigarettes." "Essentially, the issue before the court is not whether a fraud case be proven, but whether damages can be proven for the period since each smoker started smoking, failed to stop, switched to, or started with 'lights' rather than the standard cigarettes in vogue up to the introduction of 'lights' on a large scale," he wrote.

Michael Hausfeld, a lawyer for the plaintiffs, said as many as 50 million Americans could join the lawsuit seeking between $100 billion and $200 billion in damages.

The sum "corresponds to the amount of revenues perceived from the light cigarettes between 1971 and to date," he said.

Tobacco firms said they would appeal, arguing that the judge erred in allowing a class action.

"We'll ask the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals to review the decision and to stay all proceedings pending review," said David Howard of Reynolds American, parent of RJ Reynolds.

Philip Morris USA general counsel William Ohlemeyer said his company "believes that the appellate court will find that today's certification decision runs counter to the overwhelming weight of federal and state case law regarding class actions in smokers' litigation and must be reversed." Ohlemeyer added, "This case involves smokers who are not seeking to recover for personal injuries, who continue to smoke 'light' cigarettes and who paid no more for Marlboro Lights cigarettes than they would have paid for regular Marlboros."

THIS file photo shows packages of Marlboro Lights and Ultra Lights cigarettes sitting on a Washington, DC bar. AFP

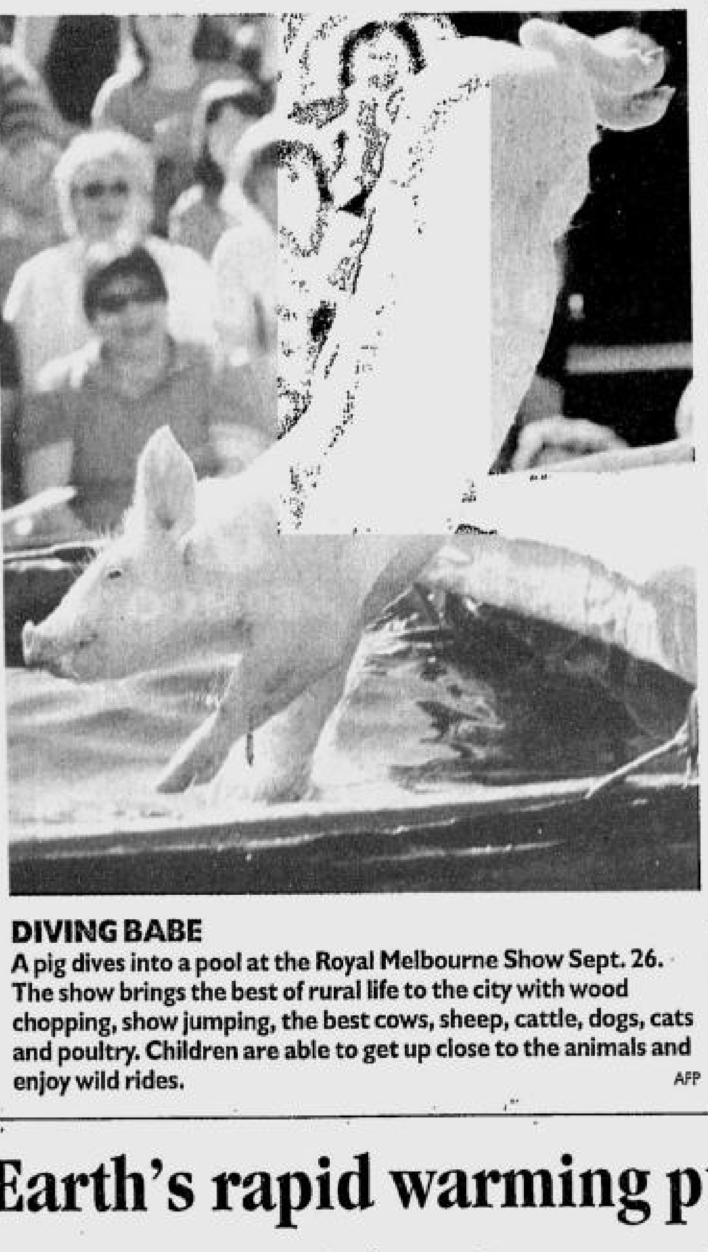
Richard Jahnke, analyst at Briefing.com said the ruling was "disappointing" for major tobacco companies and opens the door to damages of $120 billion to $200 billion.

The lawsuit, "was seen as one of the last large legal hurdles facing the industry," he said. "This presents a considerable overhang for the industry, and could have specific implications for Altria Group's restructuring plans." Cigarette makers recently won a major victory in a US government lawsuit when a federal judge in the US capital ruled that even though the companies may have misled smokers, the firms cannot be held liable for punitive damages.

In the other major case pending against the industry, Florida's Supreme Court in July tossed out a landmark $145-billion punitive damage award against cigarette makers to hundreds of thousands of smokers, calling it "excessive as a matter of law."

The lawsuit filed in May 2004 alleged a decades-long conspiracy to try to show light cigarettes were safer.

"The industry's goal was not to develop less harmful cigarettes, but to develop cigarettes that would be perceived as less harmful," said the suit. *AFP*



DIVING BABE

A pig dives into a pool at the Royal Melbourne Show Sept. 26. The show brings the best of rural life to the city with wood chopping, show jumping, the best cows, sheep, cattle, dogs, cats and poultry. Children are able to get up close to the animals and enjoy wild rides. AFP

Abe elected Japan PM, picks Cabinet members

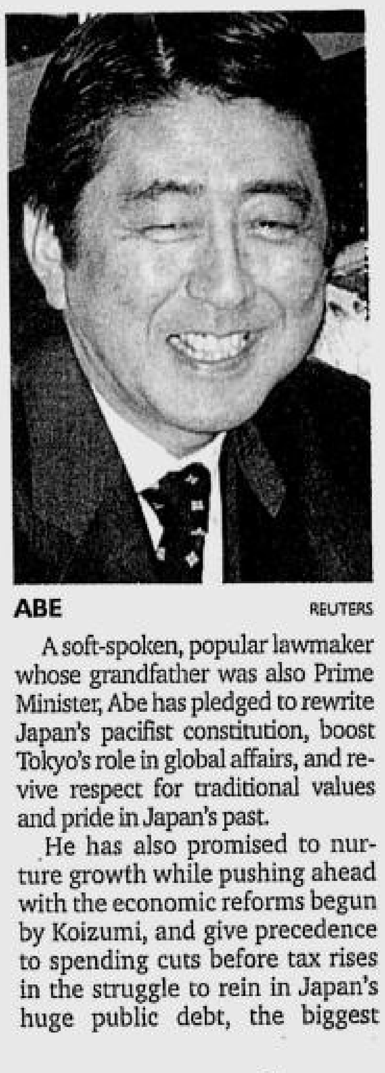
TOKYO—SHINZO ABE, AN ADVOCATE of tighter ties with Washington and a bigger say for Japan in world affairs, was elected Japan's Prime Minister by parliament on Tuesday, becoming at 52 the youngest Japanese leader since World War II.

The hawkish Abe, a relative novice by Japanese political standards, faces the challenges of repairing ties with China—frayed by predecessor Junichiro Koizumi's visits to Tokyo's Yasukuni war shrine—and keeping economic reforms on track while addressing voter concerns about widening social gaps.

In a new cabinet announced later in the day, outspoken Foreign Minister Taro Aso, 66, who shares many of Abe's conservative views, kept his portfolio, while former Defense Minister Fumio Kyuma, 65, was named to the defense post.

Koji Omi, 73, a former economic planning agency chief, was named Finance Minister, while economics professor Hiroko Ota takes over as Economics Minister.

Abe, elected president of the governing Liberal Democratic Party last week by a two-thirds majority, bowed to applause after being chosen Prime Minister by parliament's powerful lower house.



ABE REUTERS

A soft-spoken, popular lawmaker whose grandfather was also Prime Minister, Abe has pledged to rewrite Japan's pacifist constitution, boost Tokyo's role in global affairs, and revive respect for traditional values and pride in Japan's past.

He has also promised to nurture growth while pushing ahead with the economic reforms begun by Koizumi, and give precedence to spending cuts before tax rises in the struggle to rein in Japan's huge public debt, the biggest among advanced countries.

Koizumi—one of Japan's most colorful and popular leaders—smiled and waved after receiving a bouquet of flowers and applause in a ceremony at the prime minister's office, as the curtain fell on his sometimes tumultuous but rarely boring reign.

Koizumi, a media-savvy maverick known for snappy sound bites and cameo appearances with celebrities, stamped his mark on Japan's political scene after taking power in April 2001 with promises to pry his party loose from the grip of vested interests and lift government's heavy hand from the stalled economy.

Ichiro Ozawa, leader of the main opposition Democratic Party—which suffered a bashing in a September 2005 general election—got 115 votes to Abe's 339 of the 476 votes cast in the 480 seat lower chamber.

Ozawa, 64, who suffers from heart problems, was hospitalized on Monday for health checks but attended the lower house session.

Abe tapped Senior Vice Foreign Minister Yasuhisa Shiozaki, 55, a Harvard-educated former central banker, as chief cabinet secretary—the premier's right-hand man and top government spokesman. Abe had held the post since last October.

Foreign Minister Aso keeps his top diplomatic portfolio as Beijing and Tokyo feel their way toward a possible thaw in ties.

Aso has offended China and South Korea with remarks about Japan's colonial and wartime record in Asia.

More recently, he has met senior Chinese diplomats for talks on a possible resumption of bilateral summits not held since April 2005 because of Koizumi's pilgrimages to Yasukuni, where Japanese leaders convicted as war criminals by an Allied tribunal are revered with war dead.

Kyuma replaces Fukushiro Nukaga in the defense portfolio; Omi takes over from Sadakazu Tanigaki in finance; and Ota succeeds Kaoru Yosano as Economics Minister.

Abe has already tapped pro growth party heavyweight Hidenao Nakagawa, 62, for the post of LDP secretary general, the party's No. 2 post and de facto campaign manager, especially important as the LDP prepares for an upper house election next summer.

Abe, who won a cabinet post as chief cabinet secretary for the first time just a year ago, also chose veterans for other key party positions, including Shoichi Nakagawa as its policy chief. *Reuters*

Earth's rapid warming pushes temperatures to hottest level in 12,000 years

WASHINGTON—THE EARTH'S rapid warming has pushed temperatures to their hottest level in nearly 12,000 years and within a hairbreadth of a million years, a study by the US space agency showed Monday.

Global warming, which has added 0.2 degree Celsius per decade over the past 30 years, has caused temperatures to reach and now pass through the warmest levels in the current interglacial period, which lasted almost 12,000 years, according to the study led by James Hansen, a leading climatologist at Nasa's Goddard Institute for Space Studies.

The study, published in the Sept. 26 issue of the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, said that Earth was now within about 1.0 °C of the maximum estimated temperature of the past million years.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration researcher said that was the most important finding of the team's research.

"That means that further global warming of 1.0 degrees Celsius defines a critical level. If warming is kept less than that, effects of global warming may be relatively manageable. During the warmest interglacial periods the Earth was reasonably similar to today," Hansen said.

"But if further global warming reaches 2.0 or 3.0 degrees Celsius, we will likely see changes that make Earth a different planet than the one we know." Hansen pointed out that the last time it was that warm was in the middle Pliocene, about three million years ago, when the sea level was estimated to have been about 25 meters higher than today.

The researchers recalled that a study published in 2003 by the British science journal Nature shows that 1,700 varieties of plants and animal and insect species had migrated toward the North Pole at an average 6.0 km per decade in the second half of the 20th century. *AFP*

WHAT'S INSIDE

■ Health key to PBA title, say coaches /A29

SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

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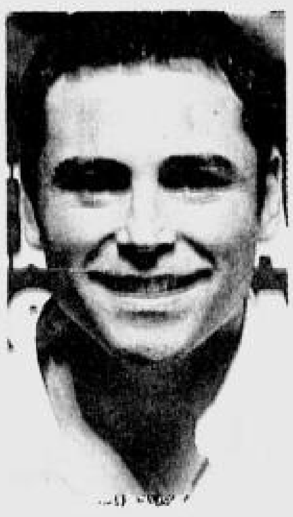
■ Defending champions in major league eliminated /A30

DL Hoya confirms Pacquiao deal



DE LA HOYA: About trust

PACQUIAO: Worried

ARUM: Interference

THE GUESSING GAME IS over.

Oscar De La Hoya, the world's most charismatic boxer-cum-promoter, has finally confirmed that he has signed seven-fight deal with Filipino ring icon Manny Pacquiao.

The hitherto secret pact immediately drew furious catcalls and a threat of legal action from Top Rank chief Bob Arum, the powerful promoter of Pacquiao's final fight with Mexico's Erik Morales.

De la Hoya revealed in an exclusive interview with ESPN.com's Dan Rafael that, indeed, Pacquiao is now under his promotional outfit, Golden Boy Promotions.

Angry Arum

"Yes, we have signed Manny Pacquiao," De La Hoya told Rafael, who first broke the news in an earlier report. "Manny wants to finish his career with us. It puts a smile on my face because he trusts us. He is putting his career in our hands. It says a lot about our company."

Rival promoter Arum was furious over the development.

Arum said the De La Hoya contract violated a stipulation in his separate agreement with Pacquiao which bars the Filipino hero from signing a promotional deal before his Nov. 18 fight with Morales in Las Vegas.

"Golden Boy has torturously interfered with our contract," Rafael quoted Arum as saying. "Under the specific language of the contract, they had to wait until after the fight was over to sign [any promotional contract].

"I'm not going to let it slide," Arum, a man both feared and respected in the world boxing community, told Rafael.

"What we do is up to the attorneys. I don't like my contracts to be violated. Manny's lawyer [Jeng Gacal] went through my contract with a fine-toothed comb. I negotiated with him and specifically this paragraph."

Arum's American lawyer, Michael Marley, in a report carried by fightnight-news.com, said there is nothing his client can do about the deal if Pacquiao signs it after the Morales fight.

"There is nothing he [Arum] can do about it [contract]... which becomes effective even two minutes after the Morales match," Michael said.

De La Hoya said they merely beat Arum to the draw.

"It was basically us out-thinking the competition," De La Hoya told Rafael. "I had a goal and that goal was to sign Manny Pacquiao. We strategized and we figured it out and we were willing to do whatever it took to sign him."

Airport interception

According to De La Hoya, he first met Pacquiao at the airport when the Filipino arrived to begin training for the Morales fight.

"Manny looks up to me and I think he can be one of the greatest fighters ever to come out of the Philippines," De La Hoya said. "We just clicked and we were able to come to an agreement."

De La Hoya said the Filipino superstar requested that the signing be kept a secret until after the fight with Morales because he was worried about retribution from Arum.

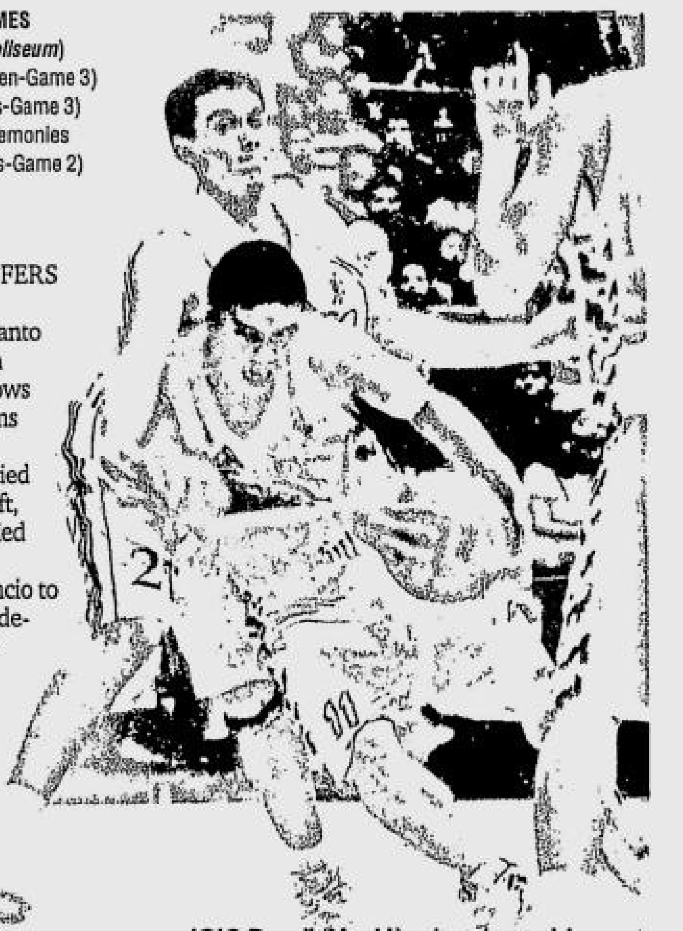
Pacquiao, according to De La Hoya, was "concerned" that Arum, the judges or the referee might go against him during the Nov. 18 match.

DE LA HOYA/ A28

There was mental lapse–Jarencio

CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES
TOMORROW (*Araneta Coliseum*)
12 noon—UST vs FEU (Women-Game 3)
2 p.m.—Ateneo vs FEU (Jrs-Game 3)
3:30 p.m.—Awarding Ceremonies
4 p.m.—Ateneo vs UST (Srs-Game 2)

By Jasmine W. Payo



JOJO Duncil (No. 11), who tries to drive past Ateneo's Zion Laterre, will try to lead the UST Tigers to an equalizer. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

COACH PIDO JARENCIO OFFERS no excuses.

For the rookie mentor, the Santo Tomas Tigers' shattering loss in Game 1 of the UAAP Finals shows the kind of mistake young teams make.

When Allan Evangelista buried a jumper with only a second left, the Tigers erupted into a frenzied celebration on court.

And it took a while for Jarencio to gather his troops back to the sidelines, reminding them that the game wasn't over yet.

True enough, the celebration was short-lived. While the Eagles kept their focus, Jarencio's final game plan didn't quite register to his excited wards.

"I didn't instruct them to switch (defensively), there was a mental lapse," admitted Jarencio.

The Tigers collapsed on clutch-shooter Chris Tiu, who turned out to be a mere decoy for the Eagles.

Evangelista, who could have been the Tigers' Game 1 hero, also took the bait and left Doug Kramer unguarded at the paint.

So in a blink, Kramer received the inbound pass from Macky Escalona and scored on an undergoal stab to lift the Eagles to a thrilling 73-72 escape.

"This is a young team, we're charging it to experience," said Jarencio.

But since the heartbreaking setback, Jarencio has been trying to keep the mood upbeat at the UST camp.

"I told them they shouldn't worry, we'll be back on Thursday," he said.

The Tigers will try to forge a do-or-die match in Game 2 at 4 p.m. tomorrow at the Araneta Coliseum.

Jarencio also challenged his players to view their one-point loss from another perspective. The overachieving Tigers, he noted, almost pulled off a stunner over the squad heavily favored to win the crown.

"We shouldn't even be here (in the Finals)," Jarencio reminded his wards. "We really have nothing to lose."

ALL SYSTEMS GO: PBA commissioner Noli Eala (center) stresses a point during the preseason press conference Monday at the Manila Hotel. Flanking him are board chair Ricky Vargas of Talk 'N Text and vice chair Tony Chua of Red Bull. The three officials announced plans for the 2006-07 season that officially opens on Sunday. ***Related story on A29.*** RODEL ROTONI

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* The Car Awards Group, Inc. and the Automobile Association Philippines are the official observers of the Petron Xtra Mile Challenge. Team Zayco Hermanos used a 1300 automatic transmission [illegible]

Bulldogs, Bombers get Champs slots

By Jasmine W. Payo

SO WHICH SCHOOL HAS THE BEST varsity team in the land?

The search begins when the Philippine Collegiate Champions League pits the country's top 16 squads in a knockout-style tournament from Oct. 3 to 14.

Among the heavy favorites for the top two slots are the San Beda Red Lions and the Ateneo Blue Eagles.

Also seeded in the Sweet 16 are the Final Four contenders in the UAAP (University of Santo Tomas, University of the East and Adamson) and in the NCAA (Philippine Christian University, Letran and Mapua).

Two schools will represent the Visayas and Mindanao after the regional qualifiers on Oct. 1.

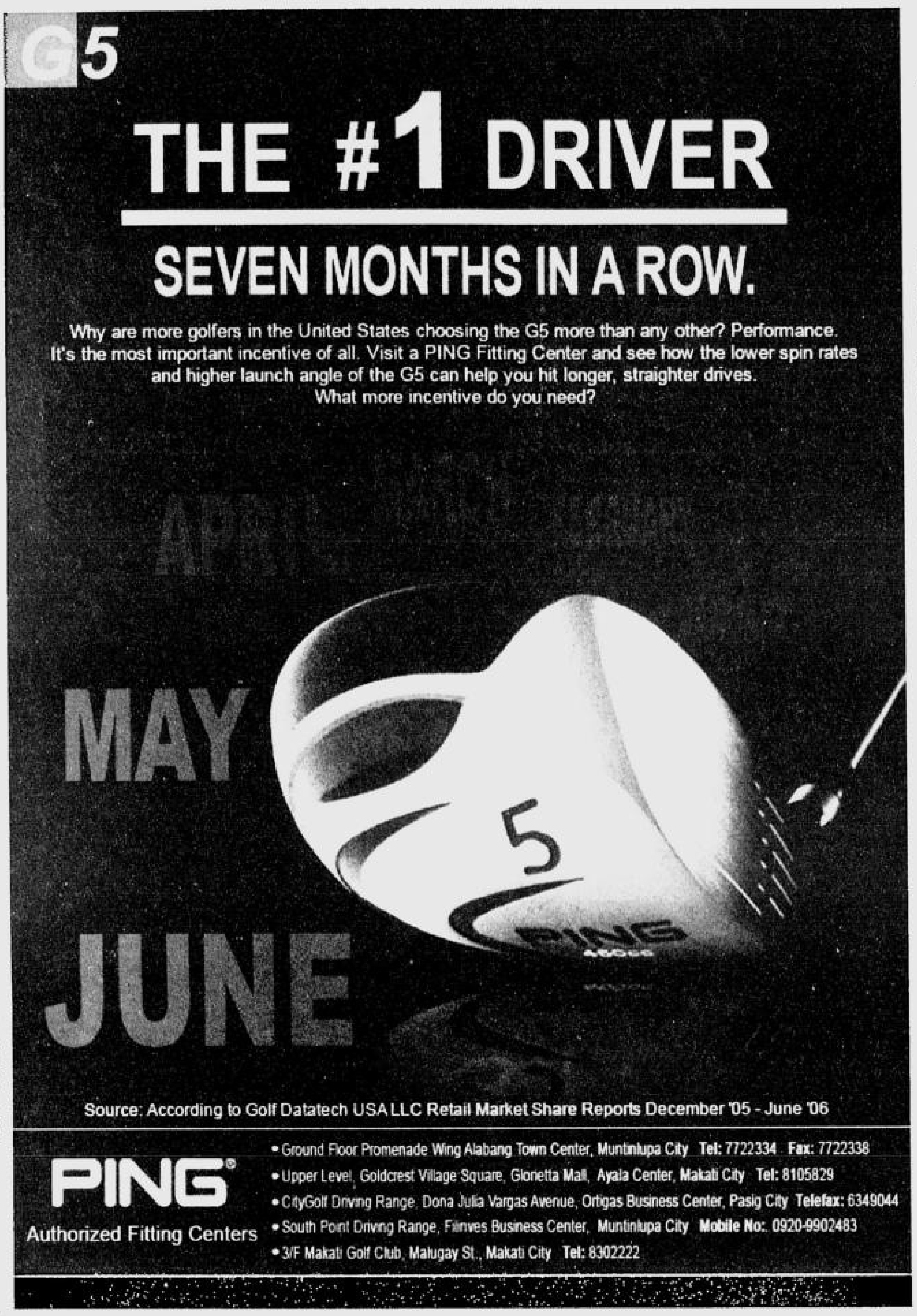
Three other colleges earned outright berths after bagging the title in their respective leagues—St. Francis of Assisi in the National Capital Region Athletic Association, AMA Computer in the National Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities and Emilio Aguinaldo College in the Universities and Colleges Athletic Association.

Jose Rizal University, National University and Philippine Maritime Institute secured the three wildcard slots by topping the media votes.

VALLE: Over US bet

Valle, 2 others advance

FORMER SAN MIGUEL BEER ASIAN 9-BALL TOUR SINGAPORE LEG WINner Gandy Valle routed American Jerry Tarantola, 11-1, to spearhead Team Philippines at the start of 2006 US Open 9-ball billiards championships Monday at the Chesapeake Conference Center in Chesapeake, Virginia. Reigning Southeast Asian Games champion Lee Van Corteza and Ramon Mistica also hurdled their rivals to make up for the loss suffered by compatriot Ramil Gallego in the tournament which drew 219 cue masters. Corteza beat Brando Perezzo, 11-5, while Mistica bested Robert Pole Jr. 11-6. The Japan-based Gallego yielded to Shane Boening, 11-8. Valle will face Evan Broxmeyer, who drew an opening round bye, in the next round. Other Filipinos bracketed with Valle are reigning titlist Alex Pagulayan, Antonio Gabica, Ronato Alcano, US-based Amang Parica and Canada-based Edwin Montal. *Marlon Bernardino*



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- 3/F Makati Golf Club, Malugay St., Makati City Tel: 8302222

Asiad TF names 269, sans cagers

By June Navarro

IT SEEMS PHILIPPINE BASKETBALL IS NOW totally out of the Asian Games picture.

The Asian Games Task Force yesterday announced that it has submitted the number of athletes vying in the Doha Asiad in December without players from the country's favorite sport.

Annie Ruiz, an official from the national sports association affairs of the Philippine Sports Commission, confirmed that 269 athletes would don the national colors in the Asiad.

The deadline for submission of entries set by the task force is Sept. 30, with the list to be forwarded the next day to the Doha Asian Games Organizing Committee (Dagoc) for final screening.

By the time the comprehensive list reaches the Dagoc on Oct. 1, it will close the doors for the national dribblers to compete in the Asiad for good.

The Philippine Olympic Committee general assembly will meet today and top of the agenda is the completion of the list of names to be sent to the Asiad by their respective NSAs before the deadline at the end of the week.

Only three of the 33 sports where the country has entries are team events—water polo, baseball and softball. Most of the athletes will be entered in medal-rich sports like athletics and swimming.

Ruiz, who pinched in for NSA affairs head Richie Garcia during the PSA Forum yesterday at the Pantalan restaurant in Manila, couldn't reveal the final size of the delegation but hinted that it could bloat to 350, excluding the secretariat.

A total of 269 athletes—185 men and 84 women—and 81 coaches and officials will comprise the delegation. Ruiz said that with the inclusion of the team sports, the P30 million set aside by the PSC for the games would not be enough.

RUSH INTERCLUB BADMINTON

8 pairs reach final round

EIGHT MORE PAIRS FROM VARIOUS CLUBS booked seats in the final round of the Rush Interclub Smashfest 2006 badminton after topping the third and fourth legs over the weekend.

Boyet and Marose Santiago led the qualifiers with a 21-12, 21-4 crushing of Jon Paule and Marivic Villarin on Saturday at Playground courts in Las Piñas.

In Makati, Francis Sabio and Josephine Raguntorn made it to the next phase after outlasting Nelson Arquiza and Len Dalistan, 21-19, 15-21, 21-16, at Badminton Central, and Roy Detoyato and Riza Valerio followed suit with a 21-17, 21-14 decision of Dinjo and Yolly Hinahon at Planet Badminton.

Joselito Mojica and Malen Enriquez routed Lawrence Parungao and Emylen Capulong, 21-13, 21-11, to top the third leg at Alabang Racket Club.

In the fourth leg on Sunday, Jofer Velez and Beth Pulido bested Jonel Abrigo and Lea Anne Larosa, 21-15, 21-14, at Feather 'n Strings in Intramuros, while James Villanueva and Lisa Tribio routed Jun Reyes and Hanna Silva, 21-5, 21-6, at Club Badminton in Makati.

Mark Cahulugan and Abel Nones outlasted Alvin Siggaot and Karla Estilles, 22-20, 21-19, at Blu Rackets in Makati, while Marvin Cliff Yan and Lorie Gabiane subdued Gary Tulio and Kit Inocentes, 21-14, 21-15, at Court Zone in Manila.

The winners of the third and fourth legs will battle the champions in the first and second legs in the finals this Saturday at Olympic Badminton Club in Libis, Quezon City.

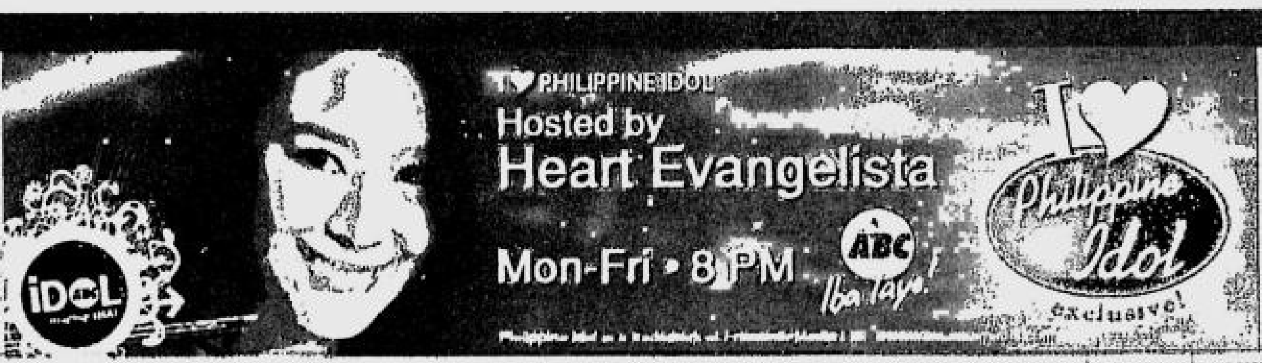
De La Hoya confirms deal. . .

From page A27

"It was Manny's request to keep it a secret until after the fight, but we talked about it yesterday," De La Hoya said. "I told him we can't keep secrets from the media or the boxing world. He understood and I assured him that everything would be OK.

De La Hoya said he assured Pacquiao that "everything would be fair" and that they would "make sure it is an even playing field." *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Wednesday, September 27, 2006



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ABC 5	Nickelodeon				Legend Of Shaolin Kung Fu	Mon Colle Night	Sentro Headlines	Letty La Mas Fea		Doble Cara		Philippine Idol	Far Fetched		Frontlines		Big News	The Apprentice	
ABS-CBN 2		Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Yakitate Japan/ Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Calla Lily	Pangako Sa 'Yo	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Super Inggo	Bituing Walang Ningning	Crazy For You		Pinoy Dream Academy	Bandila	Probe	Mirada De Mujer
AXN		Las Vegas (Season 2)		Numb3rs (Season 2)		Ripley's Believe It or Not		Alias (Season IV)		Maximum Exposure (Season 1)		Ultimate Guinness World Records	Samsung Sports World	World's Most Amazing Videos		CSI: Miami (Season 4)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 5)	
Cartoon Network	My Little Pony	All New Popeye Show	I am Weasel	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Winx Club	Xiaolin Showdown	Max Steel	Robotboy	Mirumo De Pon	Pokemon: Johto Journey	Dias/ Justirisers	Shaman King	Courage The Cowardly Dog	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	The Simpsons	Aqua Teen Hunger Force	Gundam Seed	Shaman King
Cinema One		Salome				Sandalang Bahay				Bulaklak Ng Maynila			Persona	Ito Ba Ang Ating Mga Anak?				Lihim	
Cinemax		Arabesque			Blind Date (Movie)				House Of Secrets			Battlestar Galactica Mission 10			Torque (9:25PM)			Batman (10:50PM)	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		Bones		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	I, Detective	Law & Order		Law & Order Special Victims Unit		Blood Work				The Grid/Law Firm	
Discovery Channel	Building The Ultimate	Perfect Disaster		American Chopper		Ultimate Discovery		Kings Of Construction		Wild Discovery		Hour China		Ultimate Discovery		A Haunting		Psychic Witness	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-[illegible] Bunny	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			American Dragon	Kim Possible	Buzz on Maggie	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		2006 Enjoypool.com Battle of the BCA Champs SF1		Pro Billiards '06 Enjoypool.com Women's Open 9-Ball C'ships		UEFA Champions League 2006/07				UEFA Champions League 2006/07				Sportscenter Asia	Classic Boxing: Ali The Greatest		Classic Boxing: Ali V Frazier		Sportscenter Asia
ETC		America's Next Top Model 5		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Veronica Mars 2		Beauty And The Geek 2		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen (DeGeneres) Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Cold Turkey 2		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	St. Thomas More Faithful Statesman	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	Faith In Motion	Truth In The Heart	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	Suffering And The Love Of God	EWTN Catholic Classic	The Church & The Poor: Building Bridges	Mother Angelica Live Classics		Daily Mass		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	One In Their Hearts, Holiness Of Priesthood	Parable	Rome Reports	Special Programming	
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Lahat (2:45PM)	Now and Forever (3:15PM)	Ang Pagbabago (3:45PM)		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Jewel In The Palace	24 Oras		Captain Barbell (7:10PM)		Majika		Bakekang (8:50PM)	Love Story In Harvard	Nuts Entertainment			Saksi
Hallmark Channel				Judging Amy		Sue Thomas F.B. Eye		McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine		Family Law		Judging Amy		Last Call			
HBO		Iron Eagle				Pink Cadillac				The Witches Of Eastwick				The Terminal				The Cookout (11:10PM)	
Hero TV	Gundam Seed	Sunny Pig	Last Exile	Mirmo de Pon	Sugar, A Little Snow Fairy	Naruto	Inuyasha	Saiyuki Reload	Full Metal Panic	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	Transformers Armada	Last Exile	Fortune Quest	BBDaman Bakugaiden V	Beyblade G-Revolution	Gosaurer	Gundam Seed	Yu-Gi-Oh GX
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	EBC Earth Files		Japan Video Topics/ Arts		EBC Earth Files		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Arts	Up Close And Personal	IBC News Tonite		
JackTV		Raw				Cheat	Filter	Afterburn		Mad TV		That 70s Show	Arrested Development	Last Comic Standing		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Chappelle's Show	The Late Show David Letterman	
Lifestyle Network		30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	DIY: Crafts	Iron Chef America		My Country, My Kitchen	E! Entertainment Special		Life Is Great With Brooke Burke	Martha		Fine Living Special		Intimate Portrait	
MTV Philippines		Homewrecker	Room Raiders		MTV Hits					Get Spotted		TRL					Homecoming		
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXlog	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYX Live!		Take 5	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXlog
National Geographic	Monkey Business	National Geographic Specials		Going to More Extremes: The Silk Route - Tibet		Planet Wild	Amazing Moments	Top 5: Animals Gone Wild		WOW! Stalking Leopards		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Outbreak Investigation: Curse of the Black Typhus		Crash Scene Investigation: Greek Ferry Disaster	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Alap.			Diyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Sila?	Teledyaryo W/ Ric Landel & Angelique Lazo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo Final Edition				Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	In Focus	Euromaxx	Ang Mga Nagsi-Alis Sa Daang Daan		Ang Pagbubunyag		News Beat (Live)		OpenLine Live	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	Ang Mga Nagsi-Alis Sa Daang Daan		Ang Tamang Daan		World Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal News	Euromaxx
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	SpongeBob Squarepants/ Right On Top	My Life As A Teenage Robot	Danny Phantom	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	SpongeBob SquarePants	The Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Romeo	As Told By Ginger	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Ayaw Kong Maging Kerida				Ang Kaso Ng Lalaking Sang Tinadtad Ng Mga Bangkay				Takot Ka Ba Sa Dilim?				Aguila Sa Puting Bato				Paano Ba Ang Mangarap?
Qtv	Always The Two Of Us	Shaman King	Battle B-Daman	BB Daman Bakugaiden	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Phoenix	Irene		Sorry I Love You		Now Na!		News On Q	Balikbayan		Irene
RPN 9	TV Shopping				Kapatid Show	RPN Aksyon News		Complete Savages	Jake In Progress	Iron Chef		Summerland		Extreme Makeover: Home Edition		Newswatch Now	Cerge For Truth		Kerygma
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Sony Music Video		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports				Badminton IBF World C'ships Quarters/Semis						Sagupaan	GWS 37-2006	Beach Volleyball: FIVB Women's-Poland		Phil 9-Ball Open '06		Sportsdesk	NBA Access	Vintage NBA: Clyde Drexler	
Sports Plus						Party Poker.com World Open '05				NASCAR Dover 400 Dover								BD Alaska	BD Alaska
Star Movies				8 Mile (3:50PM)			Trapped In Paradise				Five Children And It			Swamped			Skeletonman		
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Monk		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	Ed		Boston Legal		NCIS		Seinfeld	Ed
Studio 23								Blog	Pinoy Dream Academy	Wazzup Wazzup	CSI	24 (8:15PM)		It's A Guy Thing		News Central	Oprah (10:45PM)		Men's Room

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Health key to PBA title, say coaches

By Musong R. Castillo

KEEPING PLAYERS HEALTHY FOR A LONG TOURNAMENT COULD prove to be any team's key to the championship of the PBA Philippine Cup, which gets off the ground tomorrow with an overseas game in Guam.

Each team will play a total of 18 elimination-round games, and things are bound to get even tougher past that.

"It could get to a point where what matters most is how healthy your players are in the homestretch," said Purefoods coach Ryan Gregorio, who endured an injury-riddled season last season on the way to capturing the league's most prestigious trophy.

"Losing players isn't an excuse for losing games, but I tell you, every coach will put a premium on keeping players healthy with such a long format," he added.

While automatic quarterfinal berths await those who finish in the upper half of the elimination round, the other teams in the bottom will still play a wild-card round to get to the next phase.

"The more games you have to play, the more depth comes into play," said Barangay Ginebra coach Jong Uichico, who has probably the deepest bench in the league today.

"You also have to do a pretty good job at avoiding injuries," said Red Bull's Yeng Guiao, who seems to get the most out of long tournaments.

GREGORIO: In homestretch

UICHICO: More depth

GUIAO: Avoid injuries

"We played the most games last year—no less than 60—and despite that, we won a championship and made the finals in the other conference," added Guiao, who left late last night for Guam, where the Barako face the Alaska Aces.

The top two teams after the eliminations get outright slots in the semifinals, a luxury to anyone considering that this tournament could take more than four months.

"You want to advance to the semifinals the soonest possible time to cushion whatever injury might hit you," said Uichico.

Only one team in the 10-side field will get the boot after the eliminations and those who finish sixth to ninth go to the wild-card phase where the top team enters the quarters in the company of Nos. 3 to 5.

Team No. 3 clashes with the wild-card topnotcher, while team Nos. 4 and 5 five are paired in best-of-five series to determine the opponents of the top two teams in the classification round.

The winner of the No. 3 team vs the wild-card top team's matchup will advance to collide with the elimination round leader, while the No. 4 versus No. 5 victor marches on to face the No. 2 team in race-to-four affairs to determine the finalists.

The title series will also be best-of-seven.

Alaska and Red Bull clash at the University of Guam Fieldhouse at 7:30 p.m. (5:30 p.m. Manila time).

The tournament, which formally kicked off with a press conference Monday at the Manila Ballroom of the Manila Hotel, gets going with its opening rites and a game pitting the Kings against newcomer Welcoat on Sunday at the Araneta Coliseum.

SPORTSWATCH

Faves win in B-PAL caging

WANGS DOWNED PHILIPPINE STAR, 82-74, TO cap a big day for favored teams at the start of the Burlington-Philippine Advocacy League basketball tournament recently at the San Andres gym in Manila. Other favorites winning their opening assignments were Burlington Bio-Fresh over Office of the Solicitor General, 82-66, Wilcon Builders Depot over Skynet Travel/Amadeus, 111-35, GNC over Standard Chartered Bank, 86-56, and MB Hotshots over CKP, 74-69. Ronnie Matias shot 22 points and Ryan Regalado added 21 as Wangs bested the Starmen in a battle of title contenders in the tourney sponsored by Star, Accel and Wilcon Builders and backed by Sportshouse LA Gear, Kitaro, Tsoko Nut Batirol and Floral Style. The tournament resumes Oct. 1.

Ateneo de Naga golf all set

IT'S ALL SYSTEMS GO FOR THE STAGING OF the Ateneo de Naga University High School Class of 1981 silver anniversary fellowship golf tournament this Friday at the Camp Aguinaldo Golf Club course. A brand-new Toyota Vios 1.3 E is the hole-in-one prize in the tourney which benefits the Class '81 Scholarship Fund for deserving Bicolanos. Presidential son Dato Arroyo is expected to lead the ceremonial tee-off. Tournament co-chairs Arnel Cervantes and Jobe Bonafe expect alumni and Bicolano golfers to join the event. The tourney is presented by, among others, Toyota and People's Insurance, Globe Telecom, Casino Filipino, PCSO, CS Enriquez, Dura Stress, Target Market Communications, Interlink Travel, Syngenta Seeds Phils and United Transport Services. For inquiries, call 9116001 or 0920-9520297.

Car show at Megamall on

THE 2006 SPORT TRUCK & CUSTOM CAR Show opens today at the Megatrade Hall of SM Megamall B, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City. Rep. Benhur Abalos, Rep. Miles Roces and Presidential Adviser on Youth & Sports Ali Atienza will grace the ribbon-cutting rite. The show runs 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily until Oct. 1. The show draws enthusiasts of 4 x 4 off-road racing, car customizing, drag racing, open-wheel and touring car circuit racing, slalom, rallying, go-kart and car drifting. The competition will give awards for the Best of Show, Best in Class, Best Body Kit, Best in Paint, Best Audio, Best Mural, Best Engine Display and the People's Choice. The event is organized by TradeShow International Inc.

GCAP derby kicks off

BIG-TIME COCKFIGHTING RAGES ANEW AT the San Juan Coliseum as the third leg of Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) 5-Stag Derby series unwraps today. The first of 75 fights starts at 5 p.m. with Sagupaan Complexor 3000 as sponsor. So far, unheralded participants have dominated the series, with Ricky Valencia of Pasig winning the first leg and Mayor Buddy Dunca topping the second.

LGBA stagfest today

THE SECOND BATCH OF PROTAGONISTS SEE action starting at 11 a.m. today as the Luzon Gamecock Breeders Association (LGBA) 5-Stag Derby series resumes at the Araneta Coliseum with 120 fights on tap. The event, which will also be held on Friday, is backed by B-Meg Derby Ace, Gran Matador, Purina, Thunderbird, Asvet and Lakpue Drug Inc. The "straight five stags" format will be adopted. The guaranteed prize is P500,000 per day, said LGBA president Rene "Boy" Diaz. For inquiries, call 911-3101.

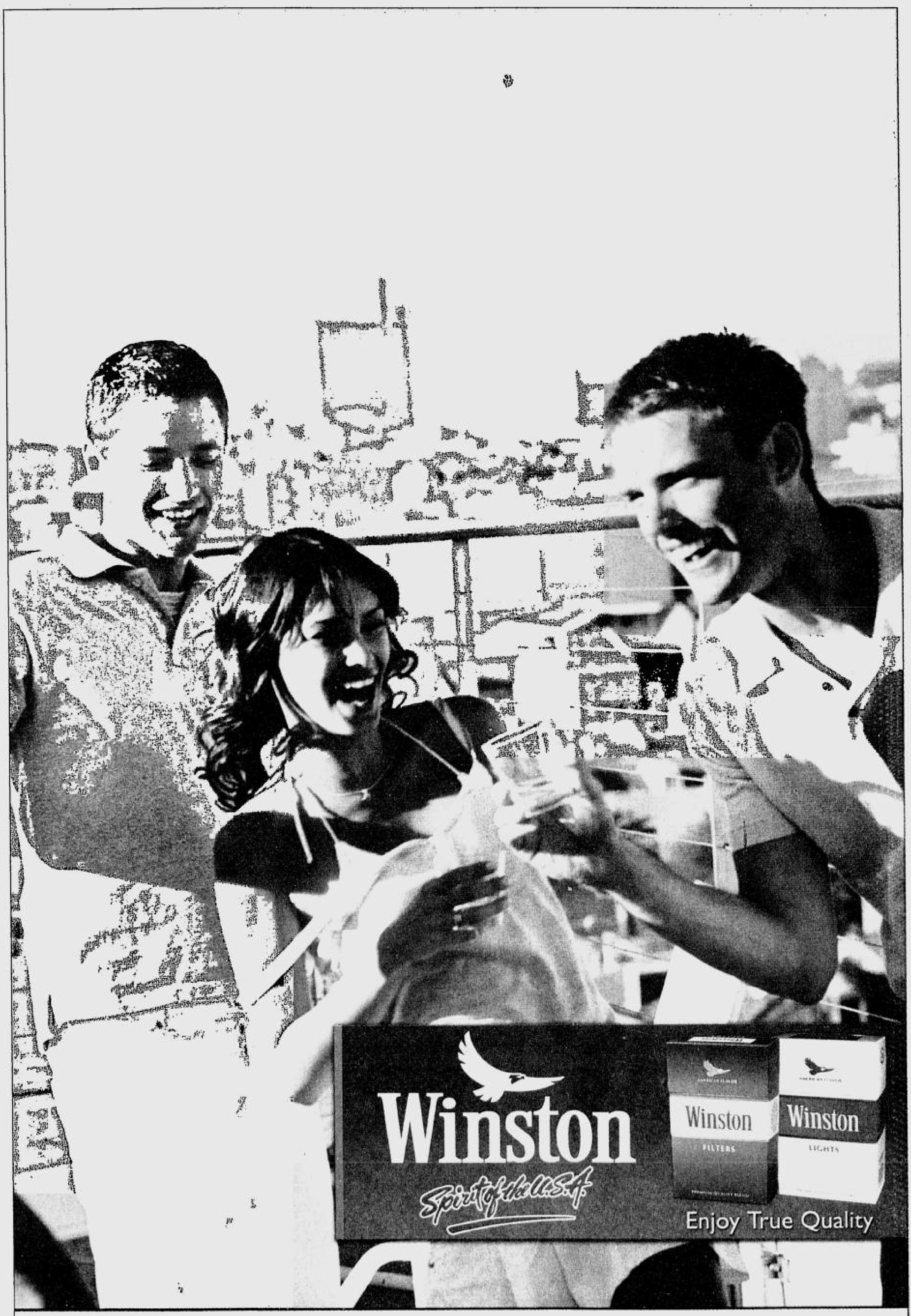
Makati derby Saturday

ANOTHER TOUGH 4-STAG DERBY WITH P300,000 at stake blasts off at Makati Coliseum this Saturday with B-Meg Derby Ace and Gran Matador as sponsors. Rey Oliveros, head of the venue's stag screening committee, will host the event. Submission of official entries is on Friday from 2 p.m.-9 p.m. Meanwhile, six participants shared the championship of the Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines 5-stag derby last Sept. 18: Henry Villarica, Boy Marzo, Ram Lopez, Rainier Kau, Pepito Ngo and the Datu Puti entry.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—I Miss You (3), Iron Mic (7), Lord Gold (4), Cool Cielo (1)
Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)— Zacky's Friend (4), Alam Mo Na Yan (6), Silver Anna (2), Nyafee's Smile (7)
Race 3—(Qrt/Tri)—Sky King (4), Long Hitter (5), Shifty (8), Infinite Passion (6)
Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Dixie The Younger (6), La Perouse (4), Looney Tune (9), Xtreme Heat (5), Striker (7)
Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Mary Jane Bomb (7), Fancy Dancer (8), Brute Force (1), Morning Glory (2)
Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Dazzling Affair (2), Coat Of Arms (4), King Aljhun (3), Calvin's Magic (6)
Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—At All Cost (8), Real Tough (5), Mr. Lucas (7), Silent Operator (2), Telimenolies (1)
Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Kenkay (10), Remus (3), Mutiara (14), Going Strike (13), Spell Bound (6), Smiling Jaeda (1)



Government Warning:
Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.

Ronaldo returns to Real

MADRID—ALL-TIME RECORD WORLD CUP scorer Ronaldo has been called up to the Real Madrid squad for the first time this season it was announced on Monday.

The 30-year-old Brazilian has not played since the World Cup quarterfinal loss to France in late June having undergone a tibia operation but is in the squad for Tuesday's Champions League group clash with Dynamo Kiev.

However it is likely that he will only play for part of the match as Real tries and bounce back from its opening 2-0 defeat by French champions Lyon with Dutch international Ruud van Nistelrooy leading the line.

"Ronaldo was included at the last moment in the squad called up by coach Fabio Capello and he could well play for a few minutes," said a statement on the club website.

Ronaldo, who seemed set to quit the club in the summer after a mediocre season last campaign, was one of the few Brazilians to impress at the World Cup finals. *AFP*

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MAJOR LEAGUE

Defending champions eliminated

MINNEAPOLIS—JUSTIN MORNEAU and Torii Hunter homered and the Minnesota Twins beat the Kansas City Royals, 8-1, to cap a remarkable turnaround by clinching a playoff spot Monday night.

Boof Bonser had another strong start in helping the Twins, who were 25-33 in early June, reach the playoffs for the fourth time in five years.

Minnesota's win, coupled with Chicago's 14-1 loss to Cleveland, eliminated the defending World Series champion White Sox from contention. The Twins trail Detroit by one game in the American League Central division.

Hunter hit his career-high 30th homer, a two-run shot in the seventh, and Morneau hit his 34th homer in the eighth, a three-run shot that gave him 129 RBIs.

Bonser (7-5) gave up one run and two hits in 6 2-3 innings as the Royals lost their seventh straight.

Jorge De La Rosa (3-4) gave up five hits and two runs and walked six in 4 2-3 innings.

In Cleveland, defending World Series champion Chicago was eliminated from the postseason after a 14-1 loss to the Indians and Minnesota's win over Kansas City.

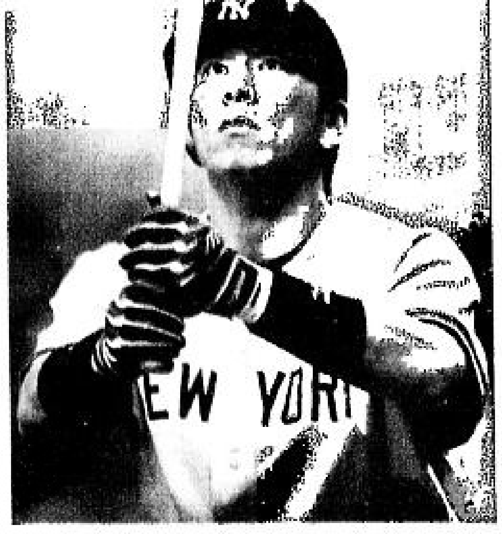
Casey Blake hit a grand slam—Cleveland's major league record-tying 14th this season—to highlight an eight-run sixth inning.

Chicago's Jon Garland (17-7) gave up 12 runs—eight earned—and 12 hits in 5 1-3 innings.

Cliff Lee (13-11) limited the White Sox to one run and four hits over seven innings.

Blake hit his grand slam off reliever Boone Logan as the Indians tied the major league record for slams in a season. They share it with the 2000 Oakland Athletics.

In St. Petersburg, Florida, Bobby Abreu and Hideki Matsui hit three-run homers in a wild six-run first for New York, which had a season-high 20 hits in a 16-1 rout of Tampa Bay. *AP*


HIDEKI Matsui of the New York Yankees takes his turn at bat in the first inning against the Tampa Bay Devil Rays. AFP

Manny can't go wrong with Freddie

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

IT'S ODD HOW some boxing buffs reacted weirdly to the news that trainer Freddie Roach will be the next manager of RP boxing god Manny Pacquiao.

This should have actually been welcomed with jubilation.

Why? Well, Pacquiao could have finally found the missing hat that has been waiting at his own shelf all these years.

Yes, Pacquiao has worn this in his biggest functions, without realizing that it perfectly fits his uneven head.

If Pacquiao has indeed decided to let his trainer to also work as his manager, it could be the start of even greater things.

***

Or it could be the end of recurring managerial troubles for the celebrated Filipino warrior.

For one, who could question the sincerity, sacrifices—not to mention the track record—of Roach in the years he has handled Pacquiao?

You see, it's been routine for Pacquiao to reward himself by taking a sweet break after a big fight.

This practice has evidently worked wonders for the RP boxing hero, although he often stays annoyingly too long from the gym.

Isn't it about time Pacquiao rewarded himself with a better, truly tested manager who, in the first place, has cared and treated him like his own son?

***

For a fact, Pacquiao will never run short of admirers that will always be ready to help and work for him.

Problem is, more often than not, there are those who end up helping themselves to Pacquiao's millions once they've hooked up with him.

These shameless hangers-on do help Pacquiao but at same time help themselves—enormously.

Pacquiao has indeed made mistakes in picking the men to run his boxing affairs.

Evidence is the slew of self-styled managers and selfish promoters—like the overdressed, talkative Murad Muhammad—who had to be kicked out from the team.

***

No need to name more names now.

Latest news is that Oscar de la Hoya has announced that his promotional tie-up with Pacquiao is official.

No matter what the disgruntled Bob Arum says, that should be another step in the right direction.

Of course, it's too early to say how sweetly the deal with Golden Boy would work.

De la Hoya needs Pacquiao more than the Pacman needs him.

***

At least, in Roach's case, it cannot be said that the trainer has been rewarded with the managerial appointment.

No, in this deal, it's actually Pacquiao providing himself with the care and concern of the man who has zealously turned him from a shallow slugger into a prizefight masterpiece.

Pacquiao needs Roach, simple as that.

Who knows? Pacquiao, with his track record, could also end up firing De la Hoya.

Not with Roach. If ever, it should be the other way around—Pacman getting the boot instead.

***

(FOUR-WARD: Merk's at the Greenbelt in Makati turns four today. Jazz Great Richard Merk, dear friend and textmate, invites everybody to celebrate "4WARD" Happening, starting at 6 p.m. Food, drinks, and an all-star cast. Fun-tastic.)

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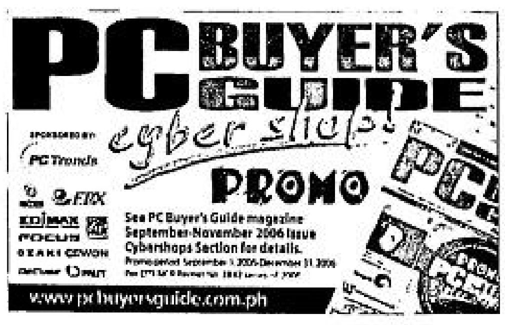
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Imports rose 16.5% to $4.46B in July

Brings 7-month trade deficit to $2.34B

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S IMPORTS SURGED BY 16.5 PERCENT to $4.46 billion in July from a year ago following the sharp rise in oil prices and a moderate increase in demand for electronic components, the National Statistics Office reported yesterday.

With dollar earnings from export of Philippine-made goods earlier reported at $3.96 billion in July, the country's balance of trade resulted in a deficit of $508 million during the month, higher than the $330 million in July last year.

Imports for the first seven months of 2006 reached $29.04 billion, or 9.6 percent higher than a year ago. The balance of trade for the January-July period, however, shrank to a deficit of $2.34 billion from $3.52 billion last year.

IMPORTS/ B4

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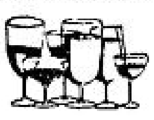


Ecozone exports rise to $19.65B

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TOTAL EXPORT EARNINGS FROM THE COUNTRY'S economic zones rose 11.25 percent from January to July to $19.65 billion from $17.66 billion in the same period last year, according to the Philippine Economic Zone Authority.

Peza reported that the four public ecozones generated $4.49 billion in receipts up to the end of July, up 13 percent from $3.98 billion a year ago.

Among the four public ecozones, the Baguio City Economic Zone exported $2 billion worth of goods; the Cavite Economic Zone, $1.3 billion; the Mactan Economic Zone, $962.7 million; and the Bataan Economic Zone, $221.9 million.

The Baguio ecozone posted a 27-percent growth while the other three recorded increases of between 3 and 7.7 percent.

At least 40 private or special economic zones (SEZ) shipped out a total of $14.67 billion worth of products, an increase of 8.7 percent from $13.5 billion a year ago.

The top five SEZ exporters were Gateway Business Park at $3.4 billion; Laguna Technopark Inc., $3.2 billion; Amkor Technology, $1.2 billion; Carmelray Industrial Park I, $990 million, and Leyte Industrial Development Estate, $840 million.

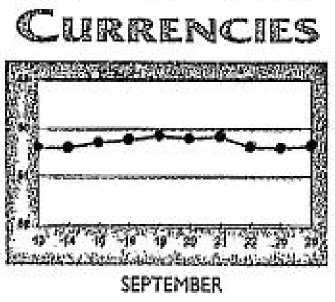
Among these top five performers, Leyte Industrial performed the best with an 80.5-percent growth while Laguna Technopark suffered a 0.5-percent decrease.

The 28 information technology parks and buildings grew the largest as they earned a total of $487.8 million in receipts or an increase of 161 percent from $186.8 million last year.

The top five IT buildings and parks from January to July were Eastwood City Cyber Park, $104.3 million; RCBC Plaza, $86 million; PBCom Tower, $61.7 million; Northgate Cyber Zone, $27.5 million; and Asiatown IT Park, $26 million.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



SEPTEMBER

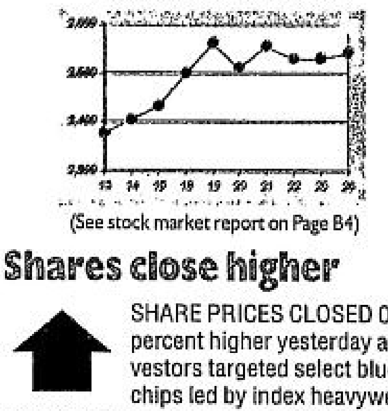
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 50.32 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Sept. 26, 2006

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Shares close higher

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.51-percent higher yesterday as investors targeted select bluechips led by index heavyweight Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), dealers said.

They said sentiment remained positive given the country's improving economic fundamentals.

The composite index closed 12.8 percent higher at 2,544.48 after moving between 2,531.68 and 2,551.93. The broader all-share index rose 4.26 points to 1,544.45.

Losers beat gainers 46 to 39 with 58 unchanged.

Turnover was 1.75 billion shares worth P1.57 billion.

"The market is climbing, albeit slowly, despite a lack of strong leads. This is because overall sentiment remains positive, given the improving economic fundamentals of the country," said Ron Rodrigo of Unicapital Securities Inc.

Rodrigo cited the continued decline in benchmark treasury bill rates, driven by

SHARES/ B4

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PSBank Home LOAN

Bangko Sentral expects RP credit upgrade

RATING AGENCIES MAY GET TO raise the Philippines' credit outlook over the next six months as the government's fiscal position continues to improve, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Ratings agencies Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings upgraded the country's sovereign outlook to stable from negative earlier this year after the government approved a broader sales tax.

The only other major ratings agency—Moody's Investor Service—has a negative outlook.

"The likelihood of an outlook upgrade in the next six months is being strengthened by sustained fiscal improvement as demonstrated by a better-than-target fiscal deficit performance for 2006," Governor Amando Tetangco yesterday said.

He added that the country's relatively stable political environment also provided support for sustained economic growth.

Moody's has a negative outlook because it is concerned about the sustainability of the government's improved revenues.

It rates Philippine debt at four notches below investment grade.

S&P's rating is three notches below and Fitch's rating is two below. *Reuters*

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RP not likely to suffer from finance risks

French bank expects risk to come from political instability

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY APPEARS TO BE AT NO RISK FROM A FRESH FINANCIAL, banking or foreign exchange crisis in the near term, according to French investment banking Calyon.

In its September market research "The Emerging Market Roadmap: An Uneasy Ride," the unit of France's leading bank Credit Agricole Group warned that a possible recession in the United States could create ripples that will affect emerging markets in varying ways.

Calyon's study summed up the three macroeconomic risks as measured by its own analytical tools: Seismograph (foreign exchange crisis), financial crisis indicator (FCI) and banking crisis index (BCI) and risk prospects in each emerging market. The country risks are classified as either "low," "significant" or "severe."

In all three measures, the risks for the Philippines were "low."

However, the Philippines still appears to be facing "significant" risks in three other criteria in Calyon's six-pronged heat-map: Economic downturn, fiscal balance and political stability.

The risk of fiscal imbalance is based on a measure of the sustainability of public finances. Risk is deemed "severe" for countries in the top 33 percent of the ranking (the higher the ranking, the worse) and "significant" for those in the mid 33 percent range, including the Philippines.

The risk of an economic downturn reflects the probability of a sharp turnaround in the business cycle, while the risk of political instability is a qualitative assessment.

Calyon's market research indicated that, as far as the risks of financial, banking and foreign exchange crises are concerned, the Philippines—along with Singapore and Taiwan—is a safer haven compared to China, Indonesia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia and Thailand.

In particular, the index suggested that India must brace for a "severe" financial crisis, while Malaysia must prepare for a "severe" banking crisis.

Risks of a financial crisis were deemed "significant" in China, Hong Kong, Indonesia and Korea, while Indonesia and Thailand were warned of a "significant" banking crisis.

Risks of political stability and fiscal balance deteriorating in Indonesia were also seen as "severe."

With easing geopolitical tensions, Calyon said risk aversion had dropped back to relatively low levels while equities had rebounded, oil prices had fallen and major currencies had remained entrenched in tight ranges.

"All of this would suggest that investors are generally comfortable with the current economic environment and that the risks ahead are seen as minimal," Calyon said.

Over the coming months, Calyon warned that asset markets both in the developed and developing economies would be sensitive to signs of slowing US growth.

Palace order threatens rural banks

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE RURAL BANKING INDUSTRY STANDS to lose a lot of business following Malacañang's issuance of Executive Order 558, which allows government institutions to provide microfinance lending similar to the services now being offered by rural banks.

According to the 700-strong Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines (RBAP), the P95-billion industry will be seriously impaired once EO 558 goes into full swing.

EO 558 cancels out a previous executive order—EO 138—issued by former President Joseph Estrada.

EO 138 had strengthened the rural banking sector, allowing it to undertake extensive microfinance lending to individual borrowers, most of whom are engaged in farming, fishing and other livelihood activities, according to an RBAP official.

As of July 2006, the rural banking sector has approved a total of 832,516 loans roughly worth P10 billion, said Emmanuel B. Guina, RBAP executive director.

"The government should reconsider this new EO 558," Guina said. "It has serious implications to the financial stability of countryside lending."

Experts have warned the government that EO 558 will set back the rural banking sector. They recalled the chaos of the 1970s when line agencies, including the Department of Agriculture, were allowed to engage in retail lending.

Guina said that during this period, around 275 rural banks were forced to close.

"It resulted in waste of government funds," said Arsenio Balisacan, an economist from the University of the Philippines. "The DA had more than P6 billion in uncollected and unpaid loans from the Masagana 99 Program."

Balisacan said that it took two decades to correct this policy, which rationalized government-directed credit programs, and channeled lending from government agencies to financial institutions.

EO 138 has been the cornerstone of the government policy that encouraged rural banks to actively provide microfinance services.

Just the plain truth,
GENERAL ABAYA

Can you look at President Arroyo straight in the eye and tell her that the military-like attempted take-over of the Poro Point Seaport had no effect on investor confidence in her administration?

This was your boast to media, General

"*Notwithstanding the Poro Point case,* which is now being deliberated in court, BCDA CEO Narciso Abaya said top developers...have continued to forge joint venture agreements with BCDA..."

[The Manila Times, Saturday, September 16, 2006, page B2]

But your Aileen Zosa contradicted your boast, General

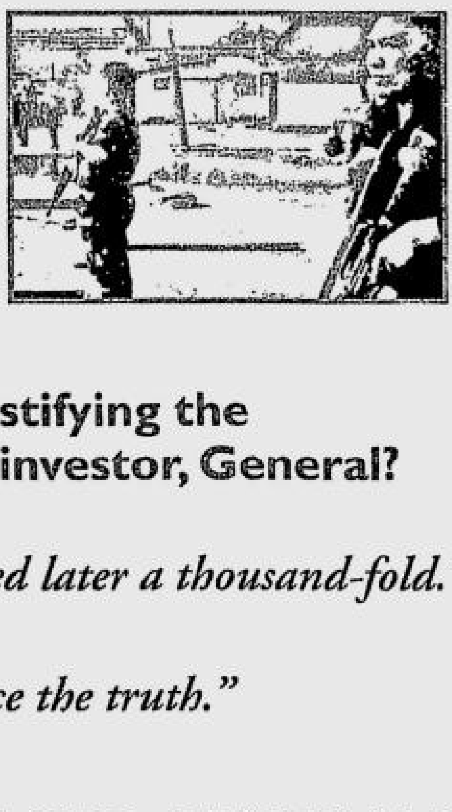
"Of the eleven (11) Proponents that bought the Terms of Reference (TOR), only Megaworld Corporation submitted the Pre-Qualification documents ... a "failure of bidding" for the disposition and development of the 1.2 hectare Expanded Big Delta Lots".

[Memorandum for the BCDA Chairman and Board Members, August 29, 2006]

Aileen Zosa

Listen to the gnawing fear among Investors, General

"The group led by Juergen Sievers, a German investor, said the use of force (by BCDA) "to resolve a business conflict is unacceptable in the local and international investor community".



Sievers said the Poro Point incident last Saturday (August 5) "could be frightening to both existing and prospective investors. The message is, if the government wants to confiscate a business enterprise, it would do so with the use of military means rather than legal procedures, he said."

[Manila Bulletin, August 10, 2006, page 7]

Were you merely trivializing and justifying the use of guns and force against a legitimate investor, General?

"The least initial deviation from the truth is multiplied later a thousand-fold."
-Aristotle

"You will never find yourself until you face the truth."
-Pearl Bailey

WHEN, AT LAST, SHALL TRUTH BE FACED, GENERAL?

Poro Point Industrial Corporation
Pennsylvania Avenue, Poro Point, San Fernando, La Union 2500

RLC share sale raises ₱9.7B

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ROBINSONS LAND CORP. RAISED P9.7 BILLION from the sale of new and previously owned shares at P12 each.

Market sources said the offering—450 million new shares and 361 million secondary shares—was 2.5 times oversubscribed.

Of the total offer, 95 percent was allotted to foreign investors and raised P5.4 billion or $108 million. The local offer period for the remaining 5 percent starts today and will end on Friday.

The selling shareholders RLC's parent firm JG Summit Holdings, which gained P87 million from the sale of its 7.26 million RLC shares; JG Summit Capital Services, P562.1 million (46.8 million shares) and sister firm Universal Robina Corp., P3.7 billion (307 million shares).

RLC said in a disclosure yesterday that its offer price of P12 a share represented a 7.7-percent discount to the weighted average price of RLC's shares for the 10 trading days ending Sept. 22.

Trading in RLC shares has been suspended since Sept. 25 and will resume on Oct. 5 when the new shares covered by the offering will be listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange.

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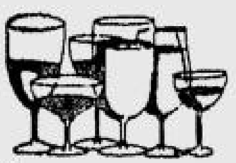

Victor C. Agustin

IT LOOKS LIKE THE SUCCESSFUL INQUIRER Libre will get some serious competition.

The Manila Standard Today of Enrique Razon Jr. is launching next month a free version, Std Xpress, which will be distributed among the early morning MRT and LRT commuters, just like Libre.

According to the grapevine, Std Xpress will also be a Taglish tabloid that will rely mainly on C-market advertising, just like Libre, to boost its bottom line.

And, just like Libre, Std Express will rely mainly on infotainment stories and photos spun off from its broadsheet parent to fill up its 12 pages.

Meant as an easy read, the free tab and its ads will hopefully get the undivided attention of the packed train commuters, while the light-fingered squad mingling among them pick their pockets. The preceding statement is, of course, a joke.

Seriously now, Razon's deep pockets have burned some holes subsidizing the English broadsheet all these years; even the merger with Today did not provide the hoped-for circulation and advertising kick-in.

On the other hand, the free Standard tabloid could very well end up subsidizing its parent, just like what is happening even among the established dailies in the great cities of the world.

According to the grapevine, the Manila Standard Today will still be maintained no matter what, more like a prestige, but profit-challenged, anchor that will provide content to its hopefully bigger-circulated offspring and, together, keep the printing press-side of the business busier.

Money-go-round

- THE Mitsubishi Pajero that has been "lent" by a sequestered company to PCGG chair Camilo Sabio sports the plate number ZHC 888. The SUV is said to be now being used mainly by Sabio's son, Milo.
- FORMER Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo is set to rejoin his former law office, Villaraza and Angangco, after the one-year prohibition period ends on Nov. 30.

Cry for help

AFTER simultaneously downloading the Yahoo! beta and the latest Firefox versions last week, our private computer started acting up, failing to load web pages even like Yahoo! and Google.

Cocktales does not think the problem lies with our Internet provider, pldtdsl, since it has not been giving us problems before, despite the number of horror stories we have heard about the service.

We nearly missed the deadline for this column, and had to rush to an Internet cafe to finish it. Can anybody out there help?

Heard through the grapevine

A VERY married broadcaster has been seen at least twice in the company of a very married billionaire enjoying themselves in Rockwell.

Apparently, their respective partners are aware that there is more to the meetings than food and supposed interviews.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

Firm ups stake in EasyCall

By Riza T. Olchondra

TRANSNATIONAL DIVERSIFIED GROUP has raised its stake in EasyCall Communications Philippines Inc. to 90 percent.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, EasyCall said TDG's wholly owned subsidiary, Global e-Business Solutions, bought 10.632 million EasyCall shares on Sept. 19.

Combined with the 72.243 million shares that Global E-Solutions already has, the TDG unit now has 82.875 million shares, equivalent to 90 percent of EasyCall.

TDG, founded by Filipino businessman Jose Roberto Delgado, controls more than 30 companies engaged in logistics, ship management, air and travel services, information and communications technology, and investment management.

The TDG unit bought all of the shares held by McMal, Inc. and another 2.76 million shares from a block sale of 7.76 million shares by Matrix Telecommunications Asia Ltd.

Palos Verdes Land Corp. bought the remaining five million shares from Matrix, which has sold its entire stake in EasyCall.

TDG's increased stake in EasyCall was seen to facilitate Global e-Business Solution's merger with the erstwhile paging giant, which was seeking a reincarnation as a provider of Internet-related services, including VoIP or voice over Internet protocol.

EasyCall is also anchoring its turnaround on a 25-percent stake in business outsourcing products provider e-Performax.

The call center's growth contributed to EasyCall's P3-million income as of June.

Phinma to expand university network

Group to focus on 'no frills' education

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE PHINMA GROUP WILL INCREASE ITS investments in affordable, quality education for Filipinos as it builds its network to five universities.

Phinma chief executive officer Ramon del Rosario Jr. said in a briefing following the recently-concluded Asian Corporate Social Responsibility forum that Phinma was set to expand its network to five universities by 2008 with a possible acquisition this year.

Phinma also plans to beef up its combined student population to 100,000 over the next eight to 10 years.

Today, it has 11,000 students enrolled in its Cagayan de Oro College and Araullo University in Cabanatuan City.

"But this is a drop in the bucket in the number of Filipinos that need to be educated. We're focusing on no-frills education, no air conditioned classrooms, no world class choirs, we're sponsoring championship basketball teams, these are all good but add to the cost of education. We want to keep the tuition at P12,000 a semester ," Del Rosario said.

Del Rosario, who is also a founding member of private sector-led policy advocacy group Philippine Business for Education (PBed), said there was also a need to study how the country's future students would be competitive with the rest of the world.

For one, he said Philippine students go through just 10 years of education at the elementary and high school levels compared with 12 years in other countries in Southeast Asia.

DEL ROSARIO

"How can we bring back the amount of education to at least 11 years or eventually 12 years? That is what we are studying at PBed," Del Rosario said.

He also said that there was a need to look at ways to bring back English proficiency among students.

University presidents have suggested that for the first three years, kids have to be taught in the mother tongue to be able to understand the lessons.

English should be introduced in the next two to three years and then eventually used as a medium of instruction.

Imports rose 16.5% . . .

From page B1

Dennis Arroyo, director for policy and planning at the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda), admitted that there was not much cause for excitement about the rise in imports in July because the growth had largely to do with the increase in oil prices. He noted that the average price of Dubai crude grew 31 percent year-on-year to $69.17 a barrel during the month from $52.83 last year.

Documents from the NSO showed that spending for imported mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials reached $782.02 million in July, representing an 89.7-percent increase from the same month last year.

But Arroyo said the growth in imports of capital goods—such as for use of aircraft, ships and boats—electrical machinery and telecommunication equipment was a notable development.

"(Growth in imports of capital goods) is a sign pointing to improved investments, which is good for the economy in general," Arroyo said in a phone interview.

Spending for imported transport equipment reached $189.49 million, up 46.4 percent from last year's $129.42 million. Cost of imported industrial machinery and equipment amounted to $182.27 million, growing by 17.9 percent from the $154.58 million recorded last year.

Electronic products, used as raw materials for finished electronic goods such as laptops, amounted to $1.95 billion, rising 3.1 percent from last year's $1.89 billion. Electronics accounted for 43.6 percent of the country's imports.

The NSO reported that the United States was the biggest source of imports in July, accounting for 15.9 percent or $709.23 million. Japan was second with 12.6 percent or $560.54 million.

On the local front, the NSO also reported that the output of the country's manufacturing sector, measured in terms of volume of production, continued to decline in July due mainly to tough competition from cheap imports.

The volume of production index (VoPI) declined by 10.4 percent in July from the same month last year, according to data from the Monthly Integrated Survey of Selected Industries by the NSO.

Compared with that of the previous month, production volume in July registered a 2.8-percent drop.

Jesus Arranza, president of the Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI), said the declining volume of output by manufacturers should be blamed on the lingering problem of rampant smuggling.

"The unabated smuggling is eating up a huge share of the domestic market. But the industry is already doing something about it by providing assistance to Customs on their anti-smuggling operations," Arranza said in a phone interview.

NSO data showed that the biggest losers in July, in terms of a drop in production volume, were: electrical machinery (-40.9 percent), petroleum products (-22), transport equipment (-15.7), tobacco (-24.8), chemical products (-6.4), non-metallic mineral products (-20.3), non-electrical machinery (-51.1), beverages (-10.2), wood and wood products (-25.2), textiles (-6.8), footwear and wearing apparel (-2.1), rubber products (-8.2), fabricated metal products (-1), and leather products (-12.7).

The drop in the production by these sectors more than offset the growth recorded in basic metals (69.6 percent), food manufacturing (11.8), furniture and fixtures (20.7), miscellaneous manufactures (8.2), paper and paper products (4.6), and publishing and printing (1.7), the NSO said.

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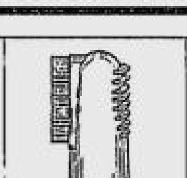

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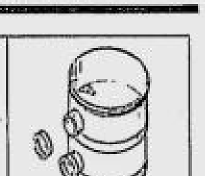

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of September 26, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.4	22,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	39	39	38.5	38.5	660,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	58	59	58	58.5	997,900
China Banking Corp.	690	690	690	690	5,710
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.43	0.43	0.41	0.41	6,500,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	75	76	75	75.5	1,351,700
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	40	40.5	40	40.5	403,800
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	46	46	46	46	300
Philippine National Bank	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	13,600
Phil. Savings Bank	43	43	43	43	3,300
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	18	18	18	18	19,000
Security Bank Corp.	50.5	51.5	50.5	51.5	38,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	44.5	44.5	44	44	6,400
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	3.75	3.85	3.65	3.65	1,326,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	10,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1615	1635	1615	1635	3,320
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	230	230	230	230	15,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2035	2080	2035	2080	4,580
Ivantage Corp.	1.36	1.4	1.36	1.38	2,242,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	48.5	48.5	47.5	48.5	497,600
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	49	49	49	49	404,200
Manila Electric Co. A	19	19.25	19	19.25	116,400
Manila Electric Co. B	28.5	29	28.5	29	551,600
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9	9	9	9	683,000
Petron Corp.	4.15	4.2	4.1	4.15	4,128,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1	1	0.99	1	190,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	41,000
CADP Group Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	1,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23	23	22.75	22.75	33,100
Jollibee Foods Corp.	35	35	34.5	35	301,500
RFM Corp.	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	630,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.6	3.65	3.6	3.6	1,151,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65	65.5	65	65	134,500
San Miguel Corp. B	74.5	75	74.5	74.5	129,400
Universal Robina Corp.	18	18	18	18	806,400
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.29	4,010,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.74	1.78	1.74	1.78	2,240,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	13,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	5	5.1	4.95	4.95	887,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	134,000
CHEMICALS					
Corro-Coat Inc.	3.9	4.1	3.9	4.1	3,609,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	90,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.58	0.6	0.56	0.58	168,550,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.155	0.155	0.145	0.145	14,810,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.007	0.0075	0.007	0.0075	3,000,000
Atok-Big Wedge.,Inc. B	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	13,000
Ayala Corp.	465	472.5	465	470	162,610
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	70,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	2,363,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.028	0.028	0.027	0.027	4,500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.98	2	1.98	1.98	446,000
APC Group Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.24	0.245	1,060,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	30,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	320,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	3.25	3.3	3.25	3.3	187,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.08	1.14	1.08	1.1	61,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.24	1.24	1,519,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	885,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	1,136,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.1	471,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.22	3,258,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	20,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	15,000
Solid Group Inc	0.63	0.64	0.6	0.6	540,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.125	0.125	400,000
SM Investments Corp.	243	248	243	248	241,720
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.38	1.5	1.38	1.44	2,050,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	3,140,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.5	9,259,100
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	150,000
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	1,930,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1	1	1	1	120,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.32	0.32	3,480,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	767,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	1.24	1.3	1.24	1.26	155,000
Cebu Prop. Vent B	1.24	1.3	1.24	1.3	200,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	1,200,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.19	0.19	190,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.51	0.52	0.51	0.51	9,050,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.98	1	0.98	1	340,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.055	0.0575	0.055	0.0575	4,800,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	210,000
Gotesco Land Inc.B	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	100,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	100,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	620,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	4,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.88	1.9	1.86	1.9	27,111,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.5	3.5	235,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	100,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.155	0.155	120,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.4	0.41	0.4	0.41	900,000
SM Development Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.82	1.82	401,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.4	8.4	8.3	8.3	1,193,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.0875	0.0875	0.0875	0.0875	400,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.25	16.5	4,500
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.26	1.26	1.24	1.24	311,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1075	1080	1070	1080	79,130
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	4.6	4.6	4.55	4.6	2,668,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2220	2260	2220	2255	194,380
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	100,000
Ionics Inc.	2	2	1.96	1.96	155,000
IPVG Corp.	2.3	2.5	2.3	2.3	205,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.055	0.06	0.055	0.0575	19,500,000
Philweb Corp.	0.029	0.03	0.029	0.03	231,000,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	1,427,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	280,700
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	330,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.98	1.98	1.96	1.98	7,288,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	200,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	10,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	8.7	8.7	8.7	8.7	17,000
Far Eastern University	850	850	850	850	100
iPeople Inc	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	10,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.08	2.1	2.06	2.08	188,000
Paxys Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	468,300
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	6.4	6.4	6.2	6.2	2,250,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	6.3	6.5	6.2	6.2	1,246,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	126,300,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	8.5	8.5	8.2	8.4	944,000
Benguet Corp. A	11	11.25	10.5	10.75	59,100
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2	2	2	2	20,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.25	14,520,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	2,460,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.023	364,500,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.028	0.028	0.027	0.027	264,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	297,000,000
Philex Mining Corp.	3.85	3.85	3.75	3.85	9,156,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	18.75	19	18.5	19	63,100
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.45	320,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	200,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	50,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	53,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	5,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1	1	0.94	1	2,752,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1	1	0.99	1	2,418,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	9.6	9.6	9.5	9.5	179,000

CURRENCIES

September 26, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.784375	1.000000	50.3450
Japan	Yen	0.006732	0.008583	0.4321
United Kingdom	Pound	1.490627	1.900400	95.6756
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.100772	0.128474	6.4680
Switzerland	Franc	0.633072	0.807103	40.6336
Canada	Dollar	0.702405	0.895496	45.0837
Singapore	Dollar	0.494718	0.630716	31.7534
Australia	Dollar	0.589445	0.751484	37.8335
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.080737	2.652731	133.5517
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.209150	0.266645	13.4242
Brunei	Dollar	0.493163	0.628733	31.6536
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000108	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.020934	0.026689	1.3437
UAE	Dirham	0.213563	0.272272	13.7075
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.274900	64.1848
Argentina	Peso	0.253228	0.322841	16.2534
Brazil	Real	0.352481	0.449378	22.6239
Denmark	Kroner	0.134036	0.170882	8.6031
India	Rupee	0.017115	0.021820	1.0985
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.213261	0.271887	13.6882
Mexico	New Peso	0.070894	0.090383	4.5503
New Zealand	Dollar	0.524665	0.668896	33.6756
Norway	Kroner	0.120244	0.153299	7.7178
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012959	0.016521	0.8317
South Africa	Rand	0.102119	0.130191	6.5545
Korea	Won	0.000831	0.001060	0.0534
Sweden	Kroner	0.107431	0.136964	6.8955
Syria	Pound	0.015110	0.019264	0.9698
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023819	0.030367	1.5288

Shares close higher

From page B1

liquidity in the financial system and the government's improving finances.

PLDT, the most actively traded stock, rose P35 to P2,255.

Conglomerate Ayala Corp. was up P7.50 at P470 but its unit Ayala Land Inc. fell 25 centavos to P14.50.

Food and beverage firm San Miguel Corp.'s "A" and "B" shares remained steady at P65 and P74.50. *AFP*

DOF told to resolve sin tax law impasse in Subic

Customs excise tax collection way below target

By Michelle V. Remo

A CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITtee has instructed the Department of Finance to maximize efforts to expedite the lifting of the injunction on the implementation of the sin tax law in Subic.

In a recent hearing by the Senate committee on finance, committee chair Sen. Franklin Drilon raised the concern over the huge revenue loss brought about by the injunction imposed by the Olongapo City Regional Trial Court in May last year.

According to the minutes of the committee hearing, Drilon said the injunction hindered the Bureau of Customs' revenue collection efforts.

The senator said it had prohibited the BOC from collecting the P25-per-pack excise tax on premium cigarettes and the sin tax on alcohol products sold in Subic.

Estimates showed that the government stood to lose P3 billion in potential revenue yearly if the sin tax law would not be implemented in Subic. It is in the Subic Bay Freeport where most imported cigarettes are sold.

The Senate finance committee said the DOF should include working on the lifting of the injunction as one of its priority agenda to improve revenue collection, the importance of which is stressed by the country's lingering fiscal problem.

The bureau is expected to collect P4.5 billion worth of excise taxes on tobacco and alcohol products this year under Republic Act No. 9334, otherwise known as the Act Raising the Excise Tax on Sin Products or the sin tax law.

The BOC, however, turned in only about P400 million worth of excise taxes from tobacco and alcohol importers in the first half of the year.

DOF data showed that collection of excise tax on cigarettes stood at only P82 million, representing a 55-percent drop from the P184 million collected in the same period a year ago. Excise tax revenue from alcohol reached P317 million, higher by 16 percent from the previous year's P274 million.

The department attributed the lower-than-expected collection of excise taxes on cigarettes and alcohol to the injunction, which prohibited the government from imposing the tax on sin products shipped through the Subic Bay.

In issuing the injunction, Olongapo City Judge Ramon Caguioa said the sin tax law was unconstitutional because imports through the Subic Bay Freeport should be duty-free. The decision was anchored on the complaint filed by importer Indigo Distribution Corp.

The Office of the Solicitor General, representing the DOF, filed an appeal immediately after the Olongapo City judge issued the order.

Aussie firm buys stake in RP oil drilling group

AUSTRALIA'S TAP OIL LTD HAS ACQUIRED an 85-percent stake in a consortium drilling for oil in the Sulu Sea in southern Philippines.

Philodrill Corp. and South China Resources Inc., two members of the consortium, announced in separate statements sent to the Philippine Stock Exchange that they had completed a "deed of assignment" to Tap Oil, subject to the approval of the Department of Energy.

It was not stated how much Tap Oil's acquisition was worth.

This deal "forms part of Tap's strategy to establish a new area of focus in oil and gas rich areas of Southeast Asia," South China Resources said.

The consortium will be drilling for oil in the Sandakan basin in the South China Sea, covering an area of about 5,000 square kilometers (2,000 square miles) with water depths ranging from 200 to 2,000 meters (660 to 6,600 feet), the South China statement said. *AFP*

PNOC bullish on exploration prospects

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL CO. (PNOC) said the ongoing overhaul of the local energy exploration sector had succeeded in winning back the confidence of international investors in the Philippine oil industry.

PNOC president Eduardo Mañalac said government strategies put in place in the past three years had ensured that the local oil industry "will once again be taken seriously by local and international groups with the technological and financial capabilities to undertake genuine exploration activities."

Mañalac said the positive environment in the exploration sector was triggered by the government's resolve "to rid the sector of local and foreign entities with dubious and unproven credentials." He said the full review of service contracts initiated in 2003 triggered the revitalization of the sector. The review was followed by a policy of mandatory compliance with contract terms imposed on service contract holders.

He noted that the sector used to be controlled by "concessionaires who were awarded contracts without the benefit of a transparent and clear-cut process."

The adoption by the government of a new system of open and merit-based awarding of service contracts enticed foreign oil investors to "take a second look at the Philippines as an investment target," Mañalac added.

"This augurs well for the government's bid to tap and develop the Malampaya oil deposit," he said.

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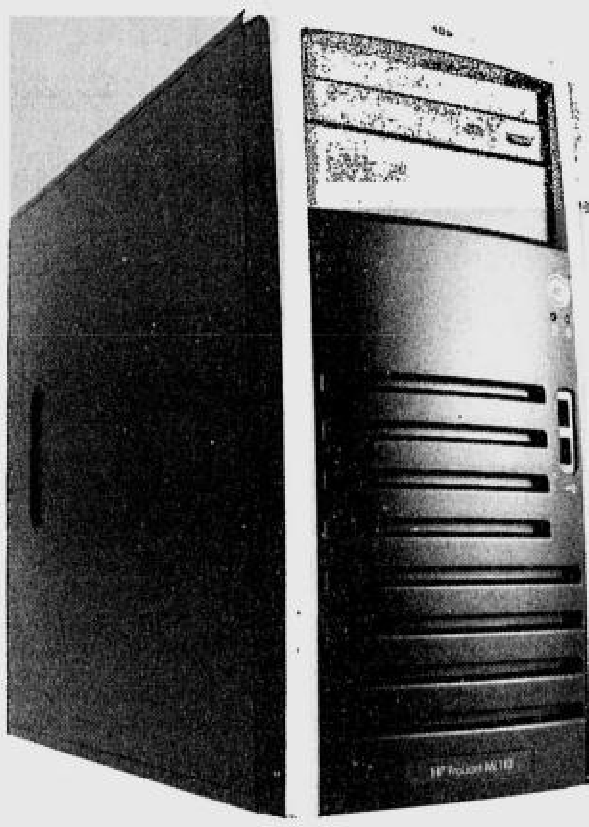

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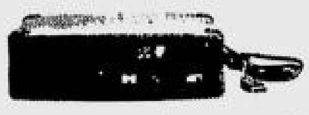

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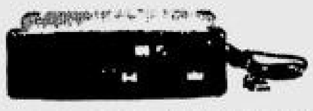

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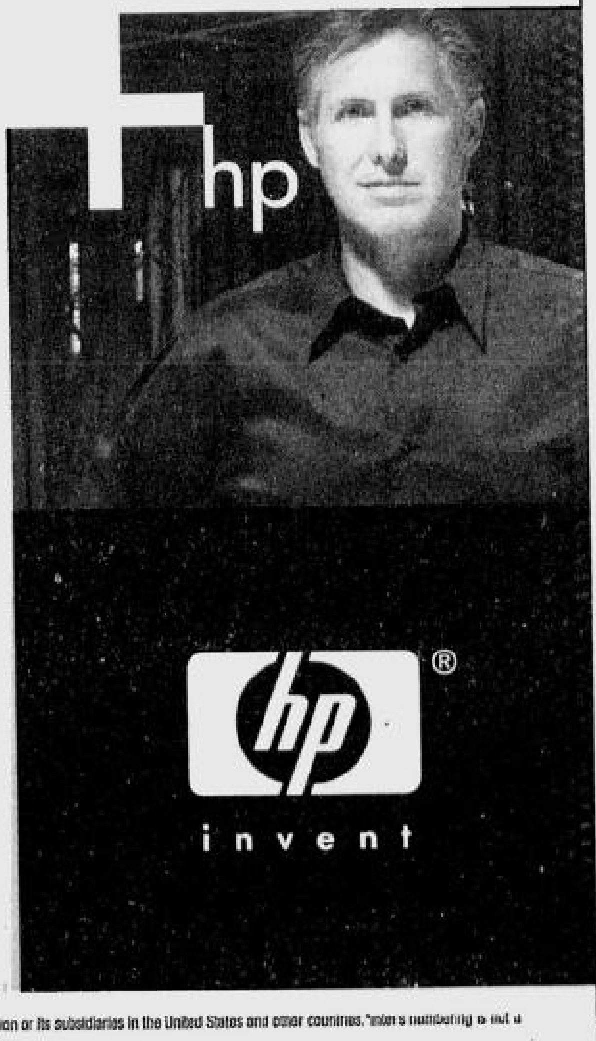

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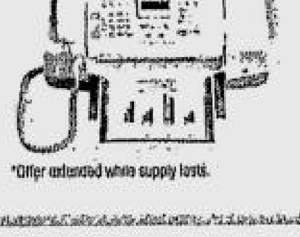

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Dolores S. Alcantara

passed away on Monday, September 25, 2006
at the age of 88.

Her loving husband ***Pianing;***
Her children and grandchildren

Fred S. *and* ***Alice B. Salaverria***
Dave *and* ***Leila***

Lito *(†) and* ***Daisy S. Dimatulac***
Gino *and* ***Katie***

Frankie S. *(†) and* ***Belen C. Salaverria***
Arnold, Ian, Joseph *and* ***Evan***

Rudy *and* ***Sonya S. Garcia***
Nikki and Jerry

Dan *and* ***Yvonne Alcantara***
Charlie *and* ***Craig, Kris;***

Her great-grandchildren, relatives and dearest friends
request prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies at the Sta. Maria Dela Strada Parish at
Katipunan Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Friday, September 29, 2006 at the
Heritage Memorial Park in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig after the
9:00 a.m. funeral mass at the Sta.Maria Dela Strada Parish.

May the blessing of the Lord be upon you
The Blessing of the Father and the Son
And may the spirit of love be with you always...

Strengthened by the last rites of the Catholic Church

ARISTEO LEVISTE LAT, SR.

one of the original five founders of the Makati Stock Exchange

entered eternal life at 2:20 p.m., September 25, 2006
at the age of 91 years, comforted by the presence of his children

Mercedes
Aristeo, Jr. and **Teresita de Leon**
Lovelinda and **Domingo Cheng**
Emmanuel and **Zenda Garcia**
Rodolfo and **Encarnacion Alfaro**
Roberto and **Evangelina Ortiz-Luis**

He shall meet in this journey, **Laura**, his wife of 59 years,
his parents **Aniceta** & **Adelardo**; his brother **Bishop Leoncio**
& grandchild **Charlene**.

His life was enriched by 15 grandchildren
and 11 great-grandchilden.

With his sisters **Aurora**, **Milagros Ramos**, **Celia Jacinto**,
Sister Irene, **Zenaida Miravite** and **Lourdes Saligumba**,
his family asks for your prayers to ease his journey
to his heavenly mansion.

He lies in state at Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Friday, September 29, 2006
at the San Pablo Memorial Park following an 11:00 AM Mass
at the San Pablo City Cathedral.

Death Notices

ONOFRE "RICO" GUTIERREZ

died on September 20, 2006 at the age of 59.

His remains lie in state at Pandacan Church, Manila. Interment will be on Wednesday, September 27, 2006 at Himlayang Mabini, Batangas after the 6:30 a.m. Mass.

ISIDORA BUELVA PILLOGO

of Balaton, Lagonoy, Camarines Sur

Died on September 24, 2006 at the age of 80.

Her body lies in state at Imperial Funeral Homes, Peñafrancia Avenue, Naga City. Interment will be tomorrow, September 28, 2006 at Eternal Gardens, Naga City.

ANTONIO NUÑEZ VERGEL DE DIOS, SR.

"Tonio"

of Cerritos, California, U.S.A.
Born on January 20, 1923 in Baliuag, Bulacan

Peacefully joined our Creator on September 24, 2006
in Anaheim, California, U.S.A.

Daddy Tonio was a devoted husband, a caring father and Grandpa, a loyal friend, a fun-loving and generous spirit. His cheerful presence will be sorely missed by all those whose lives were touched by him.

His beloved wife, **Leonor Rodriguez**, his loving children **Antonio Jr. & Lynne Balita, Lourdes & Mario Mediana, Antonino & Thelma Ungson, Teresita & Arthur Rosales, Angelito & Cynthia Zapanta**; grandchidren **Anthony & Jan, Michael, Theresa; Mary Gay & Cromwell, Mark & Jade, Kate; Antoinette, Antonino Jr., Amelia; Ryan; Eleanor, Kevin & Matthew** and great-grandchild **Kayla.**

He will lie in state at The All Souls Cemetery Chapel, Long Beach California. Viewing will be on September 28-29, 2006 from 3:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Interment will be on Saturday, September 30, 2006 at The All Souls Catholic Cemetery after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

The family requests the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

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I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith ."
(2 Timothy 4)

CLASSIFIEDS

High-end hearing aids launched

HERE'S GOOD NEWS FOR FILIPINOS WITH hearing impairments. GN Resound, a world leader in hearing device technology, is introducing to the local market its latest state-of-the-art hearing aids with a launch exhibit today at The Podium, Level 2.

Specialists in ear, nose and throat are among those invited to the event that will start with the opening of the exhibit at 4 p.m. after which there will be cocktails at 6 p.m. followed by a short program during which GN Resound's three new high-end digital hearing aids will be introduced. These are Canta 7, the latest of the Canta series, which uses digital signals processed through a software to help the hearing impaired hear better in even the most difficult listening environments; Resound Air, the first digital hearing aid designed specifically for people with high frequency loss and addresses common frustrations like the unnatural voice sound or the plugged up sensation associated with other hearing devices; and the Resound Plus 5 which boasts of providing better sound quality, unparalleled open fitting technology, unsurpassed feedback suppression, data logging that is unique in its class and instant satisfaction as it is tested and fitted the same day.

GN Resound, a product of a merger of GN Danavox and Resound in 1998, introduced the first commercially available hearing instrument using digital sound processing. With presence in more than 100 countries, GN Resound has its headquarters in Copenhagen, Denmark and is a major player in North American market where it maintains sprawling headquarters in Glenview, Minnesota, as well as a state-of-the-art research and development facility in Chicago, Illinois.

In the Philippines, GN Resound is represented by the American Hearing Center (Amearco), a company managed and supervised by respected ENT specialists as well as well-trained audiometrists. Amearco has several branch clinics around Metro Manila, with its biggest branch located at the upper basement of The Podium in Ortigas Center.

Top MDs in community service

THE AUXILIARY TO THE PHILIPPINE Medical Association, Inc. (APMA) through its President, Mrs. Loreta Y. Tee and The Outstanding Physicians in Community Service (TOPICS) Chairman Josefa A. de Jesus have announced the six winners in the 24th Search for TOPICS. They are: Drs. Ma. Minerva P. Calimag (Manila), Lydia P. Calingo (Pasig), Victor Romulo P. Dumaguing (Baguio-Benguet), Rowena A. Pua (Laguna), Edith M. Regalado (Antipolo) and Claro M. Reyes (Oriental Mindoro). Overall Chairman of the 28th Physicians Day Celebration Mrs. Haydee B. Bernal said that the awarding of the winners will be held in coordination with United Laboratories on Wednesday, September 27 at the Manila Pavilion Hotel.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Please be informed that an information for **ESTAFA** was filed against **TED MEYRICK MANCEBO** with the Regional Trial Court of Calamba City, Branch 92 under Criminal Case No. 06-14119-C. His last known address is at Main Avenue, Marymount Village, Brgy. Anos, Los Baños, Laguna. MR. MANCEBO remains at large.

For any information on his whereabouts, please call either Mmes. Lily Fajardo or Vina Madronio at Tel. Nos. 302-7279.

(PDI - Sept. 27, 2006)

NOTICE

Ma. Ann Rose Obias-Abenoja

Bernalyne R. Sanchez

Ma. Ann Rose "MaAnn" Oblas-Abenoja and **Bernalyne "Berna" Ronquillo Sanchez** are no longer connected with **Sun Village/Sun Resorts Inc.** Any transaction entered by them for and on behalf of Sun Resorts shall not be honored

(PDI-Sept. 27, 2006)

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WELCOME REALTY: 413-3313 * LOUIE: 451-0595

Pasay City East High School Batch 74 grand reunion

Attention	:	Pasay City East High School Batch 74 Graduates Grand Reunion December 2, 2006, AVR PCEHS.

Contact Persons :

Amie Robles	– 0918-302-1263
Ed Nimes	– 0920-222-9090
Norma Bedaña	– 0928-329-2802

POEA 722-1144
24-HR HOTLINES 722-1155

NFA donates empty sacks for oil spill clean-up

THE NATIONAL FOOD Authority in Region VI has donated a total of 75,414 pieces of unserviceable empty sacks to the provincial government of Guimaras to be used as booms to protect the coastline of the province from the oil spill on its shores.

NFA Region VI director Javier Lozada said 57,995 pieces were donated to the local government of Guimaras through Governor J.C. Rahman Nava while another 17,419 pieces were donated to the Philippine Fisheries Development Authority based in Iloilo.

Lozada said the empty sacks can be used as container for the recovered bunker oil residues and as receptacle for hays, chicken feathers and even human hair which are being used to absorb the oil slick.

In his report to NFA administrator Gregorio Y. Tan, Jr., Lozada also noted that a total of 2,071 bags of rice were released for the relief assistance of the local government, private relief institutions and local representatives to assist the residents affected by the oil spill.

Rice withdrawals for relief operations were either paid in cash or covered by a memorandum of agreement (MOA), he said.

Lozada assured that NFA Region VI has sufficient rice stocks to address a possible upsurge in demand for the staple especially in Guimaras which is the most affected by the oil spill.

For more information on the NFA's oil spill clean-up assistance in Guimaras, the public may send their inquiries via Text NFA Program with mobile number 0917-6210927.

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation
Republic of the Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF VARIOUS SUBSTATION EQUIPMENT FOR THE NEW 50MVA SAN FRANCISCO SUBSTATION

PB060817-LE0121/PR NO. 6MTP-06-000027755 (6MTP-06-060)

1. The NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, Head Office Region (TRANSCO-HO) through the 2006 Corporate Budget approved by the TransCo Board intends to apply the sum of ***PhP 6,294,920.00, PhP 3,620,000.00 and PhP 6,148,096.00 for Schedules I, II and III respectively*** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for ***PB060817-LE0121 / PR NO. 6MTP-06-000027755 (6MTP-06-060), Sch. I – Supply and Delivery of Telecommunication Equipment, Sch. II – Supply and Delivery of Station Battery and Charger and Sch III – Supply and Delivery of Standby Diesel Generator.*** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening. Award shall be on a lot basis.
2. The TRANSCO-HO now invites Bids from Eligible Bidders for ***Sch. I – Supply and Delivery of Telecommunication Equipment, Sch. II – Supply and Delivery of Station Battery and Charger and Sch. III –Supply and Delivery of Standby Diesel Generator.*** Delivery of the GOODS is required within forty-five (45) calendar days. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below from ***September 26, 2006 to October 23, 2006*** from ***9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.*** and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of ***Php 2,000.00.*** The method of payment will be ***Cash.*** The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. The TRANSCO-HO will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***October 10, 2006 / 10:00 AM*** at the address below.
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before ***October 24, 2006 / 2:00 P.M.*** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the following forms and amount or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not accepted.

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid
1. Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, manager's check, bank draft or Irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%) of ABC
2. Bank guarantee	One and a half percent (1-1/2%) of ABC
3. Surety bond	Two and a half percent (2-1/2%) of ABC
4. Foreign government guarantee	One hundred percent (100%) of ABC

7. Bid opening shall be on ***October 24, 2006 / 2:00 PM*** at the ***Admin Conference Room same address below.*** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
8. The ***National Transmission Corporation*** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region
Mr. Armando N. Ochoa, BAC Chairman
MMD Office, G/F TransCo Main Bldg.
Power Center, Quezon Ave., corner BIR Road
Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. (632) 9812205 / (632) 9812241
Fax No. (632) 9228432
Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) ARMANDO N. OCHOA
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – September 27 & October 2, 2006)

LACOSTE

NOTICE AND WARNING

It has come to Lacoste's attention that some persons had misrepresented having coordinated with Lacoste on intellectual property concerns purposely to extort money or harass individuals.

Unless initiated by Lacoste's attorney-in-fact, Bengzon Negre Untalan ("BNU"), any other legal action pertaining to the enforcement of Lacoste's intellectual property rights are unauthorized.

BNU is authorized by Lacoste to initiate legal actions and to coordinate with local enforcement agencies (i.e. National Bureau of Investigation, Philippine National Police and Bureau of Customs) with respect to the protection of Lacoste's intellectual property rights in the Philippines.

Other than the authorized actions undertaken by BNU, Lacoste has nothing to do with any activities, legal actions or enforcements that are neither initiated by nor coordinated with BNU. Lacoste shall take the appropriate steps to protect its integrity and those persons acting without its authority shall be dealt with in accordance with law.

The public is strongly advised to direct all concerns relating to Lacoste's intellectual property rights to its counsel and attorney-in-fact whose contact details are indicated below:

BNU

BENGZON NEGRE UNTALAN
Intellectual Property Attorneys

2/F SEDCCO Building, Rada corner
Legaspi Streets, Makati City 1229
Tel.: 632 8130120
Fax:: 632 894 2073
Email: bnu@iplaw.ph
www.iplaw.ph

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
Office of the Secretary
CENTRAL OFFICE BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
2/F Building 1, San Lazaro Compound Rizal Avenue, Sta. Cruz, 1003 Manila
Trunk Line 743-83-01 local 1625; 1626 Telefax 741-97-75
URL: http://www.doh.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SUPPLY, DELIVERY, INSTALLATION AND COMMISSIONING OF GAS CHROMATOGRAPH MASS SPECTROMETER

IAEB N0-2006-10-27-25

1. The Department of Health (DOH), through the General Appropriations Act 2006 intends to apply the sum of Fifteen Million Philippine Pesos (PhP 15,000,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Procurement of Gas Chromatograph Mass Spectrometer. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The DOH now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Procurement of Gas Chromatograph Mass Spectromter. Delivery of the GOODS is required by forty five (45) calendar days. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/ sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the Procurement Division (PD) and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of Four Thousand Philippine Pesos (Php4,000.00). The method of payment will be on a cash basis only. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The DOH will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on October 13, 2006, 1:30 p.m. at the address given below.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00 a.m., 27 October 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the following form and amount in Pesos. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Form of Bid Security	Minimum Amount in % of the Approved Budget for the Contract for the *Items* for which Bid is Submitted
Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)
Bank guarantee	One and a half percent (1.5%)

8. Bid opening shall be on 27 October 2006, 10:00 a.m., at the address given below. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. The DOH reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Central Office Bids and Awards Committee
Ground Floor, Building 6
Department of Health
San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz
Manila
Facsimile number: 7419775
Trunkline number: 743-8301 local 1625 and 1626

(Sgd.) ALEXANDER A. PADILLA
Undersecretary of Health and
COBAC Chairperson

(PDI – Sept. 20 & 27, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
RT MINERAL AND RESOURCE CORP. 570 Padre Faura St., Brgy. 669 Zone 072, Ermita, Manila	Min Qiang Ying	Chief Engineer
DUBALLO SHOES INC. Km. 16, RSTI Cpd., Pamplona Uno Las Piñas City	Yong Jin Lee	General Manager
DUBALLO SHOES INC. Km. 16, RSTI Cpd., Pamplona Uno Las Piñas City	Gye Ho Kim	President
PANIC SECURITY INTERNATIONAL CONSULTING INC. 9-I, 20 Lansbergh Place #70 T. Morato Ave., Quezon City	Hyungbae Lee	Treasurer
EDUNARA, INC. C&D, 21/F, Strata 2000 F; Ortigas Jr. Road, San Antonio Pasig City	Ki Dong Lee	Network Administrator
EDUNARA, INC. C&D, 21/F, Strata 2000 F, Ortigas Jr. Road, San Antonio Pasig City	Ji Young Lee	Coordinator

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI–Sept. 27, 2006)

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5282

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

High Temperature Calcite Inhibition Chemicals	***Approved Budget***
under ***FGM 60315***	***PHP 5,778,000.00***
under ***FGM 60316***	***PHP 20,720,000.00***
LOT	***PHP 26,498,000.00***

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Ms. Maria Cristina Lynn M. Mercado** starting **September 20, 2006** and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P400.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **September 28, 2006, 2:00 p.m.** at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Wall Clock Time)** of **October 12, 2006**. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee I

(PDI–Sept. 20 & 27, 2006)

Dacongcogon Producers' Cooperative Marketing Association
Tabugon, Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental

DACONGCOGON SUGAR CENTRAL

Announces the start of its milling Operation for Crop Year 2006-2007 on:

NOVEMBER 8, 2006
(Wednesday)

CANE ACCEPTANCE:
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or Visit our Millsite Office

TARLAC II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
San Nicolas, Concepcion, Tarlac

INVITATION TO BID

The Tarlac II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (TARELCO II) is inviting interested PCAB Contractors for the **Bidding of the proposed Construction of TARELCO II Bamban Sub-Office at Mc Arthur Hi-way, Anupul, Bamban, Tarlac.**

Prequalification documents shall be received from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM by the Prequalification Bids and Awards Committee through its Chairman, **MR. PABLITO D. MAGCALAS** at TARELCO II Main Office Building located at San Nicolas, Concepcion, Tarlac, Philippines.

Plans and Bill of Materials of the proposed project may be obtained from the BAC Secretariat upon payment of non-refundable amount of Php 2,000.00 in Cash. ***Said Bid Documents are available beginning October 11, 2006.***

Deadline for Submission of Pre-qualification Documents - October 10, 2006
Date and Time of Pre-bid Conference - October 16, 2006 at 1:30 PM

Date and Time of Bidding shall be announced during the Pre-Bid Conference.

Bids shall be accompanied by a required refundable Bid Bond (Cash, Manager's Check, Cashier's Check or Surety Bond) of at least 2.5% of the total amount to bid.

Award shall be made to responsible and complying bidder submitting the lowest bid. However, the coop reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality therein and accept/reject such bids that maybe considered and found most advantageous to coop.

Additional information shall be furnished upon request. Send all communications to the PBAC Secretariat at the address mentioned above or at Telephone No. (45) 923-0460 or Fax Nos. (045) 923-0471 & 609-0224.

Note: All Interested Bidders are requested to visit/inspect the abovementioned project before making the proposal.

(Sgd.) PABLITO D. MAGCALAS
PBAC Chairman

(PDI – Sept. 24 & 27, 2006)

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Tel# 889-7956

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Manila Water

930,000 people
from low-income
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through Tubig Para Sa Barangay
(TPSB) Program

250,000 residents
in the East Zone benefiting from the completion of
30 package sewage treatment plants

Welcome
Lingap Eskwela

11,000 jobs
generated from Manila Water's Vendor Program

100% compliance
with the water quality standards set by the Philippine National Standards for Drinking Water (PNSDW) and wastewater quality standards set by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)

PMAP
19 56

Congratulations to Manila Water
PMAP Employer of the Year 2006
Personnel Management Association of the Philippines

The 43rd PMAP Annual Conference of the

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (PMAP)

Inspiring MVPs CREATING NEW HeROes

The Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) is host to this year's biggest gathering of Human Resource (HR) professionals from all over the country in the **43rd PMAP Annual Conference** commencing today, September 27 until September 29, 2006 at the Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila, Ortigas Center.

Local and international HR experts, including respected CEOs from some of the largest local and multinational companies, as well as representatives from the government and the academe, will join participants in this exciting and enriching three-day learning experience to reflect, discuss, and analyze the many ways by which HR practitioners can become **everyday HeRoes** and truly be **Most Valuable Players and Partners** (MVP) in their organizations, the industry, and in nation-building.

To realize this goal, the 43rd PMAP Annual Conference provides HR professionals with the opportunity to:

- Uncover the **current and emerging issues and trends in HR management**
- Discover **new HR tools and strategies**
- Draw insights from the **best practices** of other practitioners
- Learn from the **sharing of local and international HR experts** and
- Identify **new competencies** needed to become more effective HR professionals

MESSAGES

MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA

Warmest greetings to the officers and members of the **Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP)** as you hold your 43rd Annual Conference.

I welcome this event, with the theme, **"Inspiring MVPs, Creating New HeRoes,"** for promoting and strengthening the role of the human resource profession as the most valued partner in the development of our public and private sectors.

By establishing the HR profession as one of the foundations of our country's socio-economic standing, the PMAP continues to display the cutting edge advantages of Filipinos, in excellence, professionalism, dedication and competitiveness.

I enjoin you to help me in my efforts to realize our common goals. I am not a miracle worker and I need your help to achieve our national aspirations. Together, let us beat the odds.

Mabuhay!

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
MANILA

The Department of Labor and Employment sends its warm greetings to the convenors and participants of the PMAP 43rd Annual Conference, themed as "Inspiring MVPs, Creating New HeRoes".

The HR practitioner is the first and last line of defense in job creation. As a professional who adds value to our people's capacities through training, career development and increase in workers' productivity, he also makes possible decent and productive employment.

The opening up of borders throughout the world has brought in new economic opportunities. At the same time, this has posed to HR practitioners the challenge of how to enable our human resources to acquire new competencies, new mindsets, new standards of thinking and creating new ways of delivering value to the world's marketplace. Meanwhile, in the local job market, the challenge is all too familiar but no less daunting: how to dramatically improve the quality of our education system's products to serve the needs of a developing economy. In both these tasks, the HR professional has his job cut out for him. The Department's role is to provide the HR professionals an enabling environment that will make his job easier.

I am confident that this gathering will shed light on all these challenges and translate them into an agenda that truly make valuable players out of our workers, managers, employers, the government and other social partners.

Mabuhay po kayo!

ARTURO D. BRION
secretary

It is with joy and great honor that I welcome you, PMAP members, friends and guests, to PMAP's 43rd Annual Conference and the celebration of its 50th Anniversary. We have so much to be thankful for this year, considering PMAP's tremendous growth in terms of membership, industry support and recognition, and the extent of its contributions to the growth of the human resource management profession in the country. This year's Conference, aside from being the apt highlight of our Golden Anniversary activities, aims to underscore these accomplishments and strengthen the role of people management as the valued partner of business and a vital player in national development.

Without neglecting its obligations to business enterprises, PMAP has actively contributed in recent years to the advancement of national interests by forging lasting cooperation between labor and management in the significant establishments composing our organization. With PMAP's leadership and continuing assistance, enterprises have now become more aware of their social responsibilities as employers - to invest in people development and to be mindful of the needs and concerns of Filipino workers. Concurrently, the PMAP membership is now increasingly becoming aware that the HR profession plays a very vital role in maintaining the balance between labor and management interests.

We in PMAP trust that this year's Conference will serve as a venue for us to reflect on the role of HR professionals in achieving growth for their organizations and for the entire country. We trust that you will find, in this year's Conference, enough inspiration to affirm our conviction that PMAP and the HR profession are important catalysts to business growth, employee satisfaction and above all, to building a thriving and unified nation.

EMERICO O. DE GUZMAN, FPM
2006 PMAP President
Senior Partner, ACCRA Law Offices

The call of the times for human resource professionals to be everyday HeRoes is undoubtedly a challenging task, over and above the existing demands of managing a new generation of human resources with increasingly diverse wants and needs. Yet as HR practitioners we understand well enough, as PMAP's history would show us, that challenges of this nature do not overawe us to inactivity; rather, we are encouraged – sometimes even stirred – to face up to the challenge and emerge triumphant. Such is the fortitude of Filipino HR managers confronted with perpetual issues.

The 43rd PMAP Annual Conference is hence not merely another call to action to be everyday HeRoes, albeit this is central and fundamental to our assembly this year. More essentially, our gathering is also recognition of our capacity to create and add value in the lives of the people we look after, in the businesses we help to prosper, and in the country we seek to be better.

Today, more than ever, our role as HR practitioners has become more and more defined: we don't just manage people, we make people better; we are not just part of business, we are one strength of business; we are not simply practitioners, we are ambassadors of our profession. It is the realization of all these that brings us all to Manila this year and together, reflect, analyze, and discuss our role in business and in nation-building.

In the midst of all these, we celebrate PMAP's golden anniversary – a truly momentous occasion that highlights 50 years of winning over challenges. This, and more than fifty other reasons, makes the 43rd PMAP Annual Conference truly meaningful and memorable.

It is with great pride that I welcome you to the conference. May we truly become everyday HeRoes who are value-adding partners and players of business and the nation.

IMELDA H. CENTENO
2006 PMAP Vice President
and 43rd Annual Conference Chair
Senior Vice President, Organization Development Division
United Laboratories, Inc.

The 43rd PMAP Annual Conference
September 27, 28, 29, 2006 at the Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila, Ortigas Center
CONFERENCE PROGRAM

DAY 1 (Wednesday, September 27, 2006)

9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	**Holy Mass**
10.00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	**Early Registration**
1:00 – 2:00 p.m.	**Registration**
2:00 - 2:30 p.m.	**Opening Ceremonies** *Opening performance by Ms. Jolina Magdangal and Mr. Jed Madela.* **Participation** **Former PMAP Presidents, PMAP Officers and Board of Directors, Chapter Presidents, and 2006 Annual Conference Directorate** * Hosts: * **Mr. Emerico O. De Guzman, FPM,** PMAP President and Senior Partner, ACCRA Law Offices; * **Ms. Imelda H. Centeno,** PMAP Vice President & 2006 Annual Conference Chair and SVP, Organization Development, United Laboratories, Inc.
2:30 - 3:00 p.m.	**Keynote Session 1: "Awakening the HeRo Within"** **Speaker:** **Mr. Menardo G. Jimenez Jr.,** Senior Vice President,Retail Business Group, PLDT
3:00 - 3:45 p.m.	**CEO Forum: "Mapping HR's Value in the Organization, Industry, and Country"** **Panelists:** * **Mr. Warner Geoffrey N. Manning,** President & CEO, HSBC * **Mr. Napoleon L. Nazareno,** President & CEO, PLDT & SMART Communications, Inc. * **Mr. Alfredo I. Ayala,** Chairman, eTelecare Global Solutions and CEO, Livelt Solutions, Inc. * **Session Facilitators:** * **Prof. Gloria M. De Guzman, PhD,** Faculty, Asian Institute of Management * **Mr. Anthony N. Pangilinan,**President, Businessworks, Inc.
3:45 - 4:00 p.m.	**Production Number** *Video presentation featuring Mr. Louie Ocampo; musical number by Ms. Jolina Magdangal, Mr. Jed Madela.*
4:00 p.m.	**Opening of the Art Exhibit; Launching of the PMAP Book** (*"People Management in the Philippines: Real Stories of Excellence"*); **Opening of the PMAP Expo; Cocktails**
6:30 p.m.	**The 30th PMAP Awards Night & Fellowship** *Fellowship night performances by AngFourgettables and Onda Latina Band* **Guest Speaker:** **Hon. Franklin M. Drilon**

DAY 2 (Thursday, September 28, 2006)

8:00 - 8:30 a.m.	**Sessions @ 8**
8:30 - 9:15 a.m.	**Keynote Session 2: "Valuing HR's Role in Business - Insights from an Industry Leader"** **Speaker:** **Mr. Carlos C. Ejercito,** President & CEO, United Laboratories, Inc. **Session Facilitator:** **Ms. Serely Geraldine D. Alcaraz,** Center Head, ITD Consulting Group and President, PSTD
9:15 - 10:15 a.m.	**Plenary Session 1: "Where Are We Now - The State of HR's Role in Driving Business in the Philippines"** **Presenter:** **Mr. Schubert Caesar C. Austero,** 2006 PMAP Research Committee Chair, Annual Conference Programs Committee Sub-Chair, and First Vice President, Human Capital Development, PNB **Reactors:** * **Ms. Leonora V. de Jesus,** Professor, College of Psychology, University of the Philippines * **Mr. Donald Patrick L. Lim,** President and CEO, Yehey! Corporation * **Mr. Michael Garrison,** Country Manager, Dell International Services Philippines **Session Facilitator:** **Ms. Ma. Regina Hechanova,** Director, Research & OD, Ateneo CORD
10:15 - 10:45 a.m.	**Coffee Break**
10:45 - 11:30 a.m.	**Plenary Session 2: "Showcase of a Winner: The 2006 Employer of the Year"** **Speaker:** **Mr. Antonino T. Aquino,** President, Manila Water Company, Inc. (2006 Employer of theYear) **Session Facilitator:** **Mr. Hernani P. Geronimo,** AVP, Corporate Human Resources, Lapanday Holdings Corporation
11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	**"HR Nuggets"** *Poster presentations ofHR Ideas.* **Introduction:** **Mr. Schubert Caesar C. Austero,** 2006 PMAP Research Committee Chair, Annual Conference Programs Committee Sub-Chair, and First Vice President, Human Capital Development, PNB **Presentation: Poster Authors**
12:00 - 2:00 p.m.	**Lunch**
2:00 - 3:30 p.m.	**Concurrent Sessions I: HR Toolbox** **Toolbox 1: "Keeping the Best: Attracting, Developing, and Retaining Talents"** **Speaker:** **Ms. Marife B. Zamora,** VP & Country Capital Manager, Convergys Philippines Services Corporation **Session Facilitator:** **Mr. Ruel T. Maranan,** Group Director, Manila Water Company, Inc. **Toolbox 2: "Strengthening HR's Role as a Business Partner Through Account Management"** **Speaker:** **Ms. Maria Elizabeth D. Nasol, FPM,** VP & Cluster HR Manager, Corporate Service, San Miguel Corporation and PMAP Board Director **Session Facilitator:** **Ms. Maribel V. Umali, AFPM,** HR Manager, Swedish Match Philippines, Inc **Toolbox 3: "Building Organizational Capability Through Investors in People (IIP)"** **Speakers:** * **Mr. Brendan J. Whyte,** President & CEO, O2 HR Solutions * **Mr. Leonides U. Garde,** President and COO, First Philippine Industrial Corporation **Session Facilitator:** **Mr. Gerardo A. Plana, FPM, IPMA-CP,** PMAP Executive Director **Toolbox 4: "Strategic Management of Organizational Conflicts Through Mediation"** **Speaker:** **Ms. Annabelle T. Abaya,** President, CORE Group (Represented by **Mr. Tristan C. Besa,** Director, CORE Group) **Session Facilitator:** **Mr. Rolando S. Santos,** Assistant Vice President, Labor Relations, HRD, GMA Network, Inc. **Toolbox 5: "The Challenge of Managing the Contingent Workforce"** **Speaker:** **Mr. David Arkless,** Senior Vice President, Manpower Inc. **Reactors:** * **Mr. Emerico O. De Guzman, FPM,** PMAP President and Senior Partner, ACCRA Law Offices * **Mr. Renato M. Jiao,** President, IBM Business Services, Inc. **Session Facilitator:** **Mr. Arthur Luis P. Florentin, FPM, SAVP,** HR Development, Manila Electric Company
3:30 - 4:00 p.m.	**Coffee Break**
4:00 - 5:30 p.m.	**Concurrent Sessions II: Case Studies** **Case Study 1: "How GMA NETWORK's Culture of Excellence Propelled It to Become No. 1"** **Panelists:** * **Atty. Felipe L. Gozon,** Chairman, President & CEO, GMA Network, Inc. * **Mr. Dexter C. Mendoza, FPM,** Vice President, HRD, GMA Network, Inc. **Session Facilitator:** **Ms. Suzanne V. Sta. Maria, FPM** **Case Study 2: "How Pancake House Professionalized the Family Business** **Speaker:** **Mr. Martin P. Lorenzo,** Chairman and President, Pancake House, Inc. **Session Facilitator:** **Mr. Vicente U. Kilayko,** Sales and Marketing Director, DBM Philippines, Inc. **Case Study 3: "How Organizational Values Helped Transform College of St. Benilde"** **Panelists:** * **Dr. Rose Marie S. Clemeña,** Executive Vice President * **Ms. Carmelita J. Lazatin,** Assistant Vice President, La Sallian Mission & Planning Office * **Mr. Robert L. Tang,** Dean, School of Management & Information Technology **Session Facilitator:** **Ms. Ana Maria Bongato** **Case Study 4: "How Organizational and HR Excellence Has Driven Figaro Coffee to Become a Successful Brand"** **Speaker:** **Ms. Pacita U. Juan,** Executive Director, Figaro Coffee Systems, Inc. **Session Facilitator:** **Mr. Ruiz G. Salazar,** HR Director, Johnson & Johnson (Philippines), Inc. **Case Study 5: "How SMART Built Winning Teams Amidst Business Challenges and Threats"** **Speaker:** **Ms. Ann Margaret V. Santiago,** Group Head, HRMDG, SMART Communications, Inc. **Session Facilitator:** **Ms. Grace Abella-Zata,** Managing Director, Corporate Executive Search, Inc.
5:30 p.m.	**Tour to SM Mall of Asia**

DAY 3 (Friday, September 29, 2006)

8:00 - 8:30 a.m.	**Sessions @ 8**
8:30 - 9:15 a.m.	**Plenary Session 3: "Competencies That HR Professionals Must Have in Delivering Business Results"** **Speaker:** **Ms. Patrocinia R. Cortez,** President, Edward Keller (Philippines), Inc **Session Facilitator:** **Ms. Cecille V. Huldem**
9:15 - 10:45 a.m.	**Keynote Session 3: "The HR Value Proposition"** **Speaker:** **Prof. David O. Ulrich,** Professor of Business Administration and Co-Director of the Human Resource Executive Program, University of Michigan **Session Facilitators:** * **Mr. Sonny Coloma, FPM,** Former PMAP President * **Ms. Imelda H. Centeno,** SVP, Organization Development, United Laboratories, Inc. and PMAP Vice President & 2006 Annual Conference Chair
10:45 – 11:15 a.m.	**Coffee Break**
11:15 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	**Plenary Session 4: "Way to the Top - Crafting the Roadmap to a Successful Career"** **Panelists:** * **Mr. Menardo G. Mateo,** President & CEO, Philips Electronics and Lighting, Inc. * **Ms. Rosita Ceres Legaspi-Aguas,** President & Managing Director, Bó Lè Associates Philippines, Inc * **Mr. Marcelino C. Pineda, FPM,** Head, HR, Nestle (Switzerland) **Session Facilitator:** **Ms. Fidelina A. Corcuera, FPM,** Senior Director, Asia Pacific Human Resources, Oracle Corporation
12:00 - 1:30 p.m.	**Lunch**
1:30 - 2:15 p.m.	**Plenary Session 5: "Becoming a Global HR"** **Speaker:** **Mr. Andrew Heard,** Managing Director, Watson Wyatt Worldwide Business for ASEAN **Session Facilitator:** **Ms. Ging L. Igual,** Growth Leader, Watson Wyatt Philippines, Inc
2:15 - 3:00 p.m.	**Plenary Session 6: "National HR Agenda: The Filipinos as Source of the Country's Competitiveness"** **Presenter and Session Facilitator:** **Mr. Enrique V. Abadesco Jr., FPM** **Panelists:** * **Sen. Edgardo J. Angara** * **Prof. Ma. Nieves R. Confessor,** Faculty, Asian Institute of Management * **Mr. Melito S. Salazar Jr.,** Vice President, Manila Bulletin and President, Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines
3:00 - 3:30 p.m.	**Coffee Break**
3:30 - 3:45 p.m.	**Conference Resolution** **Presenter:** **Mr. Victor L. Magdaraog,** Vice President, SGV-Development Dimensions International
3:45 - 4:30 p.m.	**Plenary Session 7: "Iba Pa Rin Ang Pinoy"** **Speaker:** **Prof. Bienvenido L. Lumbera,** Professor Emeritus, College of Arts and Letters, University of the Philippines, National Artist **Session Facilitator:** **Mr. Luigi O. Mapa,** Professional Development Trainer, PeopleSupport Philippines, Inc.
4:30 - 4:45 p.m.	**Closing Ceremonies: "MVP Tayo!"** *Participation from Mr. Aga Mulach, Mr. Reuben Laurente, Mr. Miguel Agila, and the 2006 Annual Conference Directorate*
7:00 p.m.	**"PMAP at 50 Gala Night: Success to Significance"** *Performances by The APO Hiking Society, Nina and Nyoy Volante, Audie Gemora and Repertory Talents, Spirit of '67 Band, and All Star HIPHOP Dance Champions.* **Special Guest:** Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

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Gov't to remove hybrid rice seeds subsidy in '07

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE said government subsidy on hybrid rice seeds would be removed in the last quarter of 2007 and that the budget for this would be reallocated to other projects of the department. Agriculture officials said the hybrid rice seeds subsidy had cost the government P3 billion in the last five years.

The subsidy scheme was introduced to encourage farmers to plant hybrid seeds which, according to the department, doubled palay yield per hectare.

Agriculture Secretary Domingo F. Panganiban said some 250,000 farmers were now planting hybrid rice and that the subsidy might no longer be necessary.

"We would like to see how the farmers would perform without the subsidy," Panganiban said.

Program cost DA ₱3 billion in five years

When the hybrid rice technology was introduced in 2001, the department shouldered the full cost of the seeds, about P2,500 per 20-gram bag, for farmers that shifted to hybrid seeds.

Over the years, the department gradually reduced the subsidy level to P1,200 per bag at present.

Agriculture rice program director Frisco Malabanan said in an interview that the wet season planting from May to October 2007 would still be covered by the subsidy scheme.

Malabanan said that by that time, more than 400,000 hectares of farmland should be planted to hybrid rice.

"The use of the technology increased the production although there has been a decline in the total areas planted to palay," he said.

Malabanan said that areas planted to palay dropped last year but rice production still increased to 14.5 million tons from 14.3 million tons.

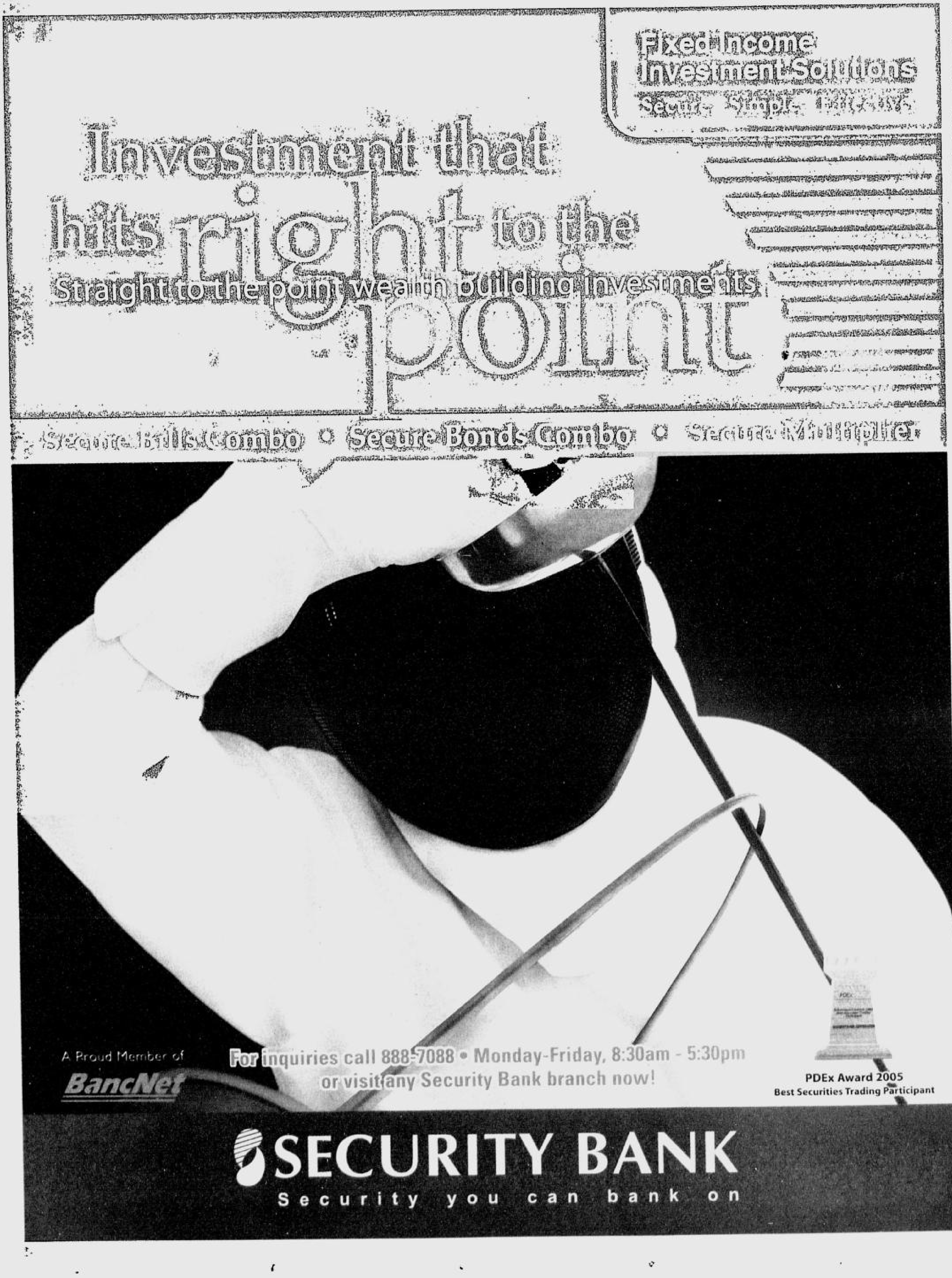
He said that with the use of hybrid rice seeds, the average palay yield per hectare improved to 3.5-3.6 metric tons from an average of 2.8 metric ton per hectare in 1999.

However, the use of hybrid seeds entails higher cost of production, estimated at P14,000 per cropping season, as farmers cannot use next generation seeds and achieve the desired yield increase, agriculture officials said.

They explained that to achieve and maintain high yields, farmers had to use only the first filial (called F1) generation of hybrid seeds. This means, farmers need to buy new seeds every cropping season.

The hybrid rice technology used in the country was developed in China.

According to the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), there are now 17 countries that are in various stages of hybrid rice development: Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, India, Indonesia, DPR of Korea, The Republic of Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the United States and Vietnam.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PDB ties up with ShoreCap

PLANTERS DEVELOPMENT Bank has teamed up with global private equity company ShoreCap International Ltd. to expand its microfinancing operations.

In a briefing yesterday, PlantersBank chair and CEO Jesus Tambunting said the partnership was in line with the bank's goal to raise its microfinancing portfolio to P1 billion in the next four years, from only about P90 million to date.

PlantersBank focuses on small- and medium-scale enterprise lending.

Under the agreement, ShoreCap, a unit of US-based first community development bank ShoreBank Corp., will make available $2 million in four-year loan for PlantersBank's microfinancing portfolio. It will also provide technical assistance in the form of training, advice and transfer of technology to support lending to small-scale enterprises.

The tie-up was forged shortly after PlantersBank announced its decision to absorb Davao-based affiliate Micro Enterprise Bank.

"This long-term partnership with ShoreCap International will enable PlantersBank to fill the financial service gaps in the micro enterprise sector at a faster rate and more efficiently," Tambunting said.

"It will also contribute to stronger, viable micro enterprises and increase the attractiveness of entrepreneurial activities as an alternative means of livelihood," he said.

Davis Golding, ShoreCap executive vice president and chief investment officer, said his company and PlantersBank shared a common thrust to provide financial support to the micro and small and medium enterprise markets.

"ShoreCap is strategically focused on making investments here in Asia and we believe the Philippines offers an excellent opportunity to implement our development mission," Golding said.

Doris C. Dumlao

MOTORING

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Prius hybrid in RP still a long shot

Text and photo by Tessa R. Salazar

THE GOOD NEWS IS THE hybrid Toyota Prius, a completely built-up sedan that runs alternately on gasoline and electricity, is now available for public viewing at the World Trade Center until tomorrow.

The bad news? That car stays in the showroom, for now. It would still be a long way before the Filipino public can actually buy one.

No incentives yet

According to Toyota Motors Philippines Inc., there are no incentives yet in the CBU category to help bring down the cost of hybrid cars such as the Prius, which would cost approximately P1.9 million—almost the same price as the high-end Camry's P1.990-million price tag.

The INQUIRER tried to get in touch with Trade Undersecretary Elmer Hernandez for any updates on incentives for CBUs, to no avail.

Danny Isla, Toyota Philippines first vice president for sales and marketing, said the Prius would not be sold in the "immediate future."

"We are carefully evaluating its viability considering its high price. The intention to introduce is there but it's still a long shot," he said.

INQUIRER Motoring reported last year that in the Philippines, a hybrid vehicle from a manufacturer has yet to come to shore. The obstacle might not lie in the market's readiness to drive a hybrid, but in the cost that such vehicles demand up front from its would-be buyers.

Commercial viability

A Prius hybrid fetching almost P2 million would be considered too steep for a 1.5-liter sedan. Isla estimated that, for the Prius to be commercially viable in this country, the price tag would have to be scaled down to P1.2 million, which is still "wishful thinking to date."

Comparatively, at the marked down price, the Prius would still be more expensive than its 1.5-liter counterparts. Isla countered that this price would be reasonable when the long-term fuel costs are factored in.

Toyota claims its 1.5-liter Prius automatic transmission (engine: 115 Nm at 4,000 rpm; electric motor 400 Nm at 0 to 1,200 rpm) is twice as fuel-efficient as that of a Toyota Corolla 1.8-liter A/T. Whereas the Corolla might run for 16 km on a liter of gas, the Prius 1.5 A/T runs for 33 km.

Propelled by tax reductions and exemptions, hybrid cars have become increasingly more commercially viable in developed countries where the hybrid race continues.

Aside from the silence particularly when the electric motor is in use, the Prius features a dashboard screen indicating when the gasoline or electric engine is used.

Prius engages the electric motor during low speed, stop-and-start traffic, reducing gasoline consumption to almost zero during city driving and in heavy traffic. At highway speeds, the Prius uses its gasoline engine.

As of July 2006, the Prius has sold 552,657 units since its introduction in 1997.

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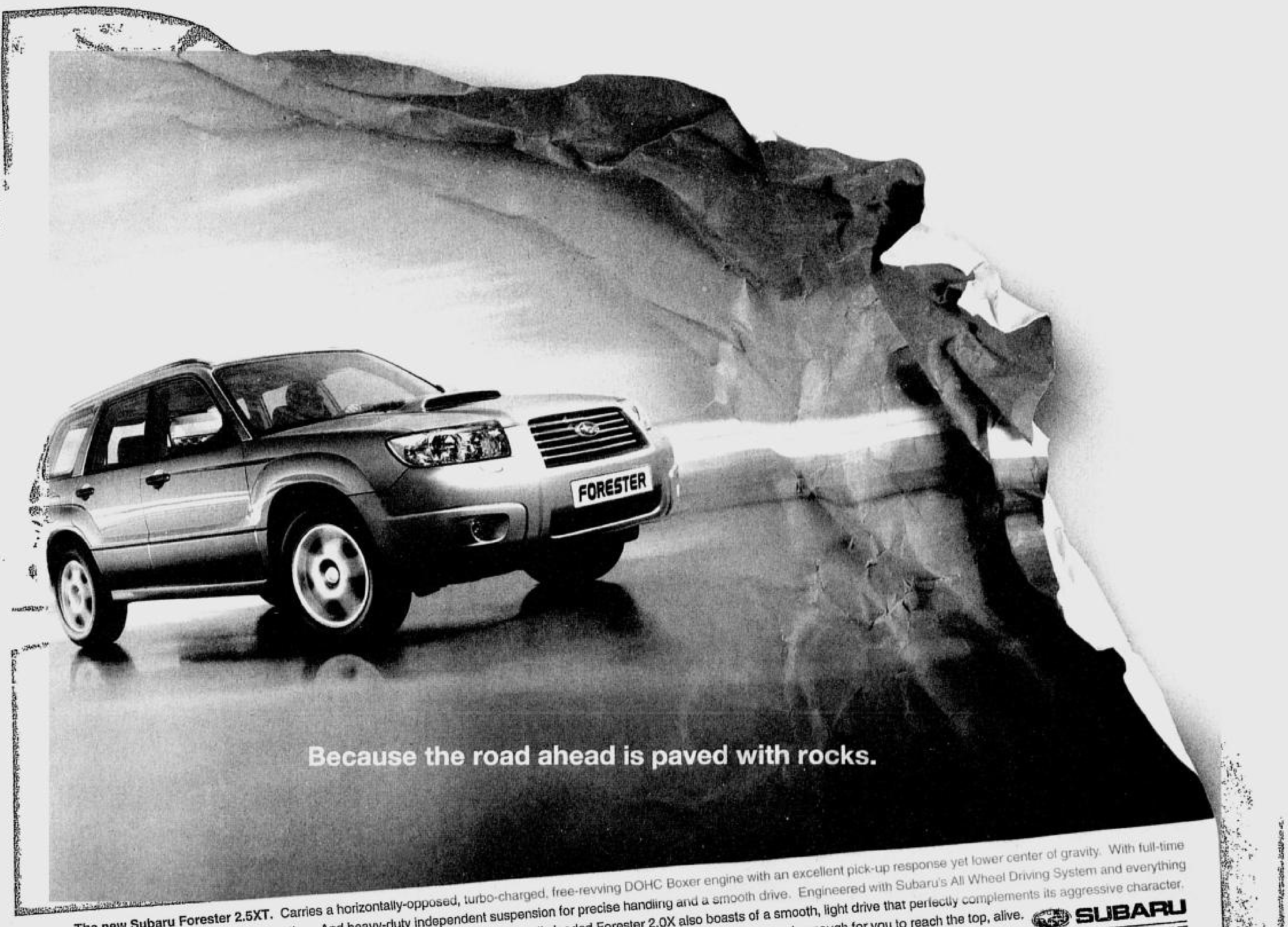

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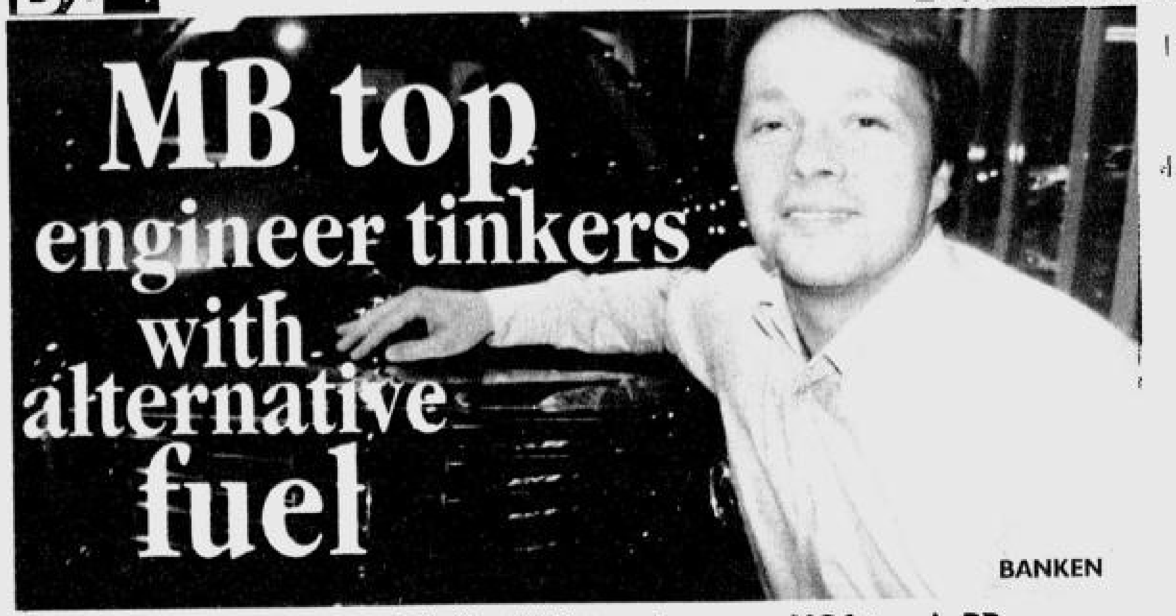
MB top engineer tinkers with alternative fuel



BANKEN

By Tessa R. Salazar

JURGEN BANKEN CAN also be considered an "airhead," so to speak. That is, he has natural gas (NG) in his mind much of the time. During his visit to the Philippines to launch the new E-Class model, he also found time to orient INQUIRER Motoring about the E-Class variant powered by natural gas.

"It's a very small project," Jurgen said about his NG project. He added that his group has already built 1,500 NGT (natural gas technology) E-Class cars, of which about a thousand were sold in Germany. The rest are now in use in Italy, Switzerland, Austria and Sweden. The only limiting factor for these cars, he said, was the lack of NG filling stations.

Jurgen explained that a sufficient net in an urban setting would require an NG filling station for every five km.

Mercedes-Benz, Jurgen said, also produces NGT variants for its other models. A model of its van, for example, is called the NGT Sprinter.

Thailand NGT ready

Outside of Europe, natural gas technology is slowly catching on as well. Thailand is a prime example of a growing market for NGT. In fact, Jurgen has disclosed that his group had delivered the first NGT-powered MB vehicles to the country a year ago. Showing how serious the country is in tapping this alternative automotive technology, Mercedes-Benz will wrap up local production of the E200 NGT in its Thailand facility by the end of the third quarter.

According to Jurgen, NGT is a niche market. "We thought that without Audi and BMW in this business, we would have a good position. And it turned out we sold more cars than we expected."

Compact cars from other manufacturers have been made using NGT, but these are not considered direct competitors to the luxury E-Class.

Jurgen said the "pump price" of natural gas in Germany is up to 60 percent cheaper than conventional gasoline.

NG future in RP

In the Philippines, the fate of CNG (compressed natural gas) production and distribution may well lie in the pipelines.

Malampaya in Palawan has been the source of natural gas since October 2003. Shell heads the Malampaya consortium. Isabela station is an exploration site of natural gas of the PNOC in the northern Philippines.

Department of Energy's oil industry management bureau director Zenaida Monsada disclosed that the Shell Philippines' CNG mother station in Batangas is being set up while its "daughter" station has facility in Biñan, Laguna.

Biñan had been the chosen site for its proximity to Batangas province—the landing site of the natural gas pipeline from Malampaya. Natural gas from Malampaya is processed and purified in Batangas, she disclosed.

"Ideally we need a pipeline," she says, that would run from Batangas to Manila for this natural gas project, Monzada.

Volvo luxury now even more within reach

DRIVING HOME A VOLVO IS now made easier with the low-interest Volvo ownership packages designed by Viking Cars Inc., official distributor and dealer of Volvo cars in the Philippines on all available models. Running until Sept. 30, clients can enjoy choosing the model that is right for them at the most appealing payment schemes that are designed to fit their financial needs.

One can choose the P300,000 off the suggested retail price or enjoy 0 percent interest financing packages on a brand-new 2006 Volvo S80. Or one can choose from a number of other Volvo ownership packages for the 2006 full model range.

All Volvo ownership packages include a 2-year warranty, Volvo genuine car mats, 3M tint, free one year registration, and to bring you more peace of mind, a 24-hour roadside assistance service.

Around the corners

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

BEFORE ANY OF YOU START complaining, I'll be the first to admit that this week's installment of "My Drift" is not entirely about cars. Then again, part of it is. It is difficult not to see the parallelism between what goes on in daily life and one's experiences behind the wheel, especially when so much of what my own life's been about is firmly rooted in my love affair with the automobile and my years learning how to drive. In the guise of a motoring column, maybe some truths about our existence can be found.

I've had to adjust the way I drive in the last six months. This is something difficult for such an old dog like me, likely too because I believed that I already had everything down pat—all the techniques, tricks and tactics needed to survive the chaotic and ultimately risky roads that our nation has to offer. Yet, in my daily commute and those times that I wear my boots, gloves, balaclava and helmet, there has been a need to reassess the way I tackle the road ahead of me.

All that was needed, I firmly believed, was to carry what I had so taken to heart from what my mentors passed on to me as a young, eager student of driving. Drive defensively, anticipate what the other drivers are doing and flow your machine through the road. These simple precepts really color most every aspect of how I operate any motor vehicle, whatever the condition.

Funny thing is whatever precaution one takes with regard to the road and one's machine is ultimately at the mercy of fate, chance and destiny to some extent. Life lines up these off camber hairpins, often after a long smooth stretch and, often times, after a blind crest. Disaster is often times just a patch of gravel, mid corner that one never anticipated.

Dramatic performance

These ideas came to me as I sat befuddled last Saturday, at another session of the Media Challenge at the Carmona circuit. Jeff Reyes of the Philippine Star was putting in consistent single minute laps, way faster than those who I thought would be leading the standings in the day, people who learned and practice the same philosophy of driving as I do. Watching him stamp his signature on the 1-km go-kart circuit with confidence and ease, with a drive that just said one thing—I know what I'm doing, I am in my element, and all the basic rules go out the window.

While my colleagues took their learnt fundamentals to the track, Jeff kicked his drive up a notch and basically blew the competition away. Talking to him after his three runs, late in the afternoon explained his dramatic performance. It is an answer that should have been so obvious to me from the beginning.

Circuit conditions are pretty much constant; the layout never changes on a given race day. Each circuit has its own quirks—ones that defy the basic out-in-out lines and cautious braking points that most every driver will identify and use. Knowing the circuit characteristics spell the difference. First, sacrificing first the first apex for the second, and then tightening an exit for a longer run up to a fast sweeper; maniacally trail braking into tight turns for a little more turn in, and a little more speed. Success is had with knowledge, experience and risk.

Conditions change

While bending the fundamentals in a closed environment sometimes yields results, one thing that hit me was that this is not something that can be applied to our daily drives or our daily lives for that matter. Even if you say that you commute the same route, every God-given day of your life, conditions change. Driving on that memorable stretch of twisty barangay road that you visit during the holidays never presents the same situation. Even attacking my beloved Kennon downhill can never be taken at ten tenths; too many factors make this dangerous and truly lethal. Feigned familiarity breeds overconfidence.

It is necessary to err on the side of caution; to chose the late apex if you will, so that one can see more of what the unexpected is. Slow into the unknown and often times overcoming these turns and twists can be done with grace. Botch the entry into the corners of life and, at the very least, one will lose momentum; as every driver will attest. Come in too hot and fast, one may not even make the turn; crashing becomes inevitable.

Life is never like a circuit where the corners are constant and the conditions pretty much regular. Most of us are therefore equipped to deal with what our daily drives and lives have to offer; it does not take a specialized skill to survive on our roads or the unknown course of life for that matter. While we look at some and marvel at the aplomb with which they tackle their path, we all are not faced with the same set of corners.

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Delivery with pizzazz

THE FOLLOWING IS A BUSINESS SUCCESS story in which motor vehicles, two-wheeled as well as four-wheeled, played—and continue to play—a starring role.

It is about a pizza parlor that was established in 2001 by Mr. E.P., a Filipino entrepreneur. Today, Yellow Cab Pizza has 54 stores across the country, as far north in Baguio City and as far south as Davao. Not bad for an all-Filipino enterprise that was opened only five years ago in competition with famous, well-established global brands such as Shakey's, Pizza Hut and Wendy's.

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

Different

What makes Yellow Cab Pizza different from other pizza chains, both local and international, is the pizzazz of its delivery system. When you order pizza from Yellow Cab, it is delivered to you via a 150 cc Vespa, the prestigious Italian motor scooter. Other pizza brands use less glamorous transportation, usually Japanese motorcycles such as the Kawasaki 100 cc.

Yellow Cab has 400 Vespas—all painted yellow, of course—across the country to deliver its products on time. Aside from 400 Vespas, Yellow Cab has a 2002 model Chrysler PT Cruiser, painted in the same bright yellow color, that is used for special occasions such as at the grand opening of a store, motorcades, car shows and sponsorship events.

Image builder

Mr. E.P. acquired the PT Cruiser for P1.5 million in 2004 from Kevin Limjoco, C! Magazine's editor-at-large. "The PT Cruiser is meant to build the image of Yellow Cab," Mr E.P. said in an interview. "The character of the car is what I wanted to portray—young, hip, retro, very much like the Vespa design." It helps that the PT Cruiser is not sold in the Philippines and is rarely seen on Philippine roads, thus contributing to the eye-catching mystique of the Yellow Cab brand. Only young people—students and models—get to drive the PT Cruiser, Mr. E.P. revealed. He himself does not drive it.

It is actually logical for Yellow Cab Pizza to own and parade a yellow automobile from America, since the pizza business was named after the ubiquitous yellow taxicabs in New York City. But while the cabs in New York are big, full-size, 6 or 8-cylinder passenger sedans, the PT Cruiser is a compact hatchback with a 2.4-liter, 4-cylinder twin cam engine producing 150 peak horsepower.

Boost sales

Together with the Chrysler 300 C executive sedan, the PT Cruiser is credited with boosting sales of the Chrysler division of Daimler-Chrysler in the first five years of the 2000s. The PT Cruiser has been consistently recommended by Consumer Reports for four years now mainly because of its reliability and versatile interior. The rear seats can be removed and the front passenger seat folded flat to increase cargo space.

With 400 Vespas at hand, Yellow Cab may well be the company with the largest number of Vespas in the world. Ninety percent of the Vespa fleet was purchased brand-new with the remaining 10 percent acquired secondhand. Mr. E.P. said that the average price of a new Vespa is P80,000 (compared to the P60,000 retail price of a 100 cc Kawasaki) while a used Vespa costs around P50,000. Mr. E.P. sources the Vespas from Italy, where the original Piaggio Vespa is manufactured and from India, where the scooter is produced by LML. There is a Vespa distributor in Metro Manila that sells both. Seventy percent of the Yellow Cab fleet are Piaggio Vespas and the rest, LML Vespas.

Mr. E.P. says that the Vespa has been a part of his life since he was a child. His father rode a Vespa in the 1950s and 1960s and when the Vespa returned to Manila in the 1990s, Mr. E.P. bought one and rode it to work in Makati almost daily. At one time, he even rode his Vespa all the way to Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte.

Rolling stock

When he was organizing Yellow Cab Pizza, Mr. E.P. saw that the Vespa has a lot of paintable surfaces for advertisements. Perhaps this is one reason he chose the Vespa for Yellow Cab's rolling stock. Another reason could be the Vespa's durability. Mr. E.P. says that the Vespa is less prone to break down since the spindle coming from the transmission is attached to the wheel and motion is not transferred by a chain.

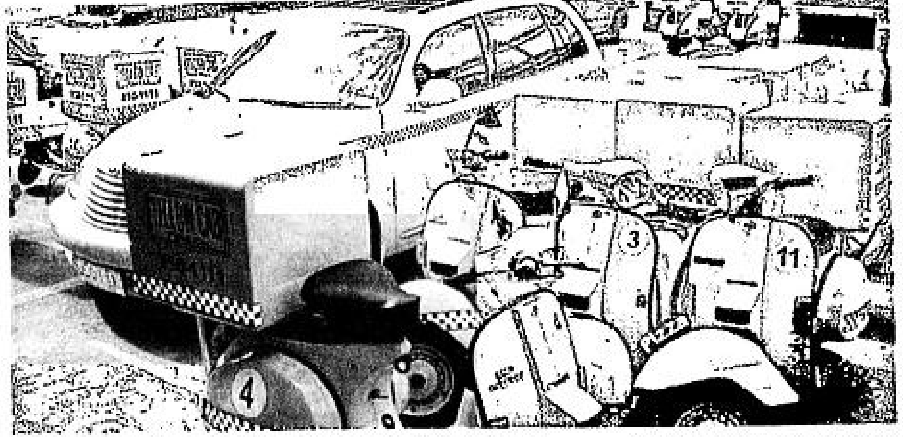
In any case, choosing the Vespa and the PT Cruiser to distinguish the Yellow Cab brand was a stroke of marketing genius. Now the question is: When will CATS Motors Inc., the Philippine distributor of Chrysler, Dodge and Jeep, make the PT Cruiser available here?

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: A committee is a group of the unwilling picked from the unfit to do the unnecessary.

* * *

E-mail comments to aida_sevilla@yahoo.com.



AMID the Yellow Cab Vespas, a yellow PT Cruiser. (PHOTOS BY AIDA SEVILLA MENDOZA)

VESPAS to deliver pizza with pizzazz, a PT Cruiser for show

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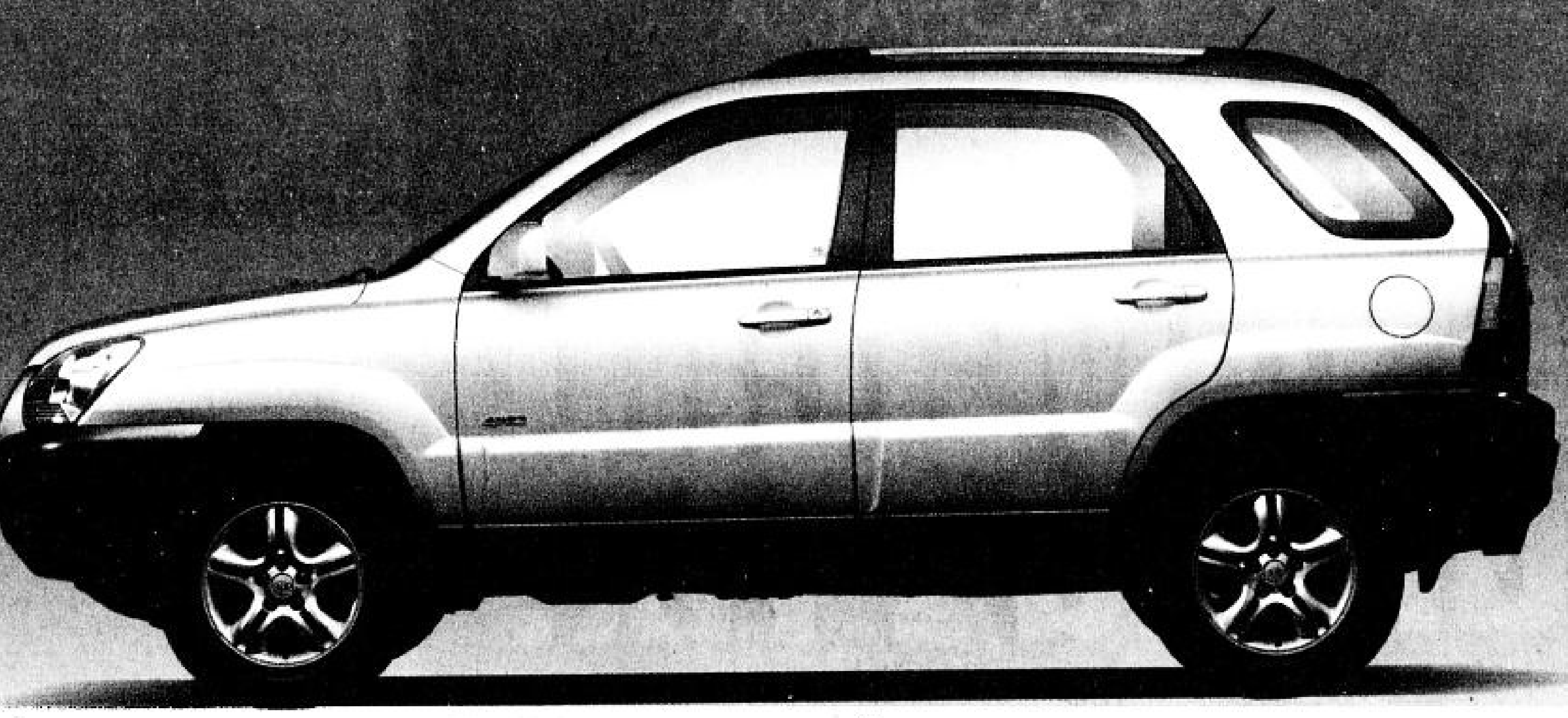

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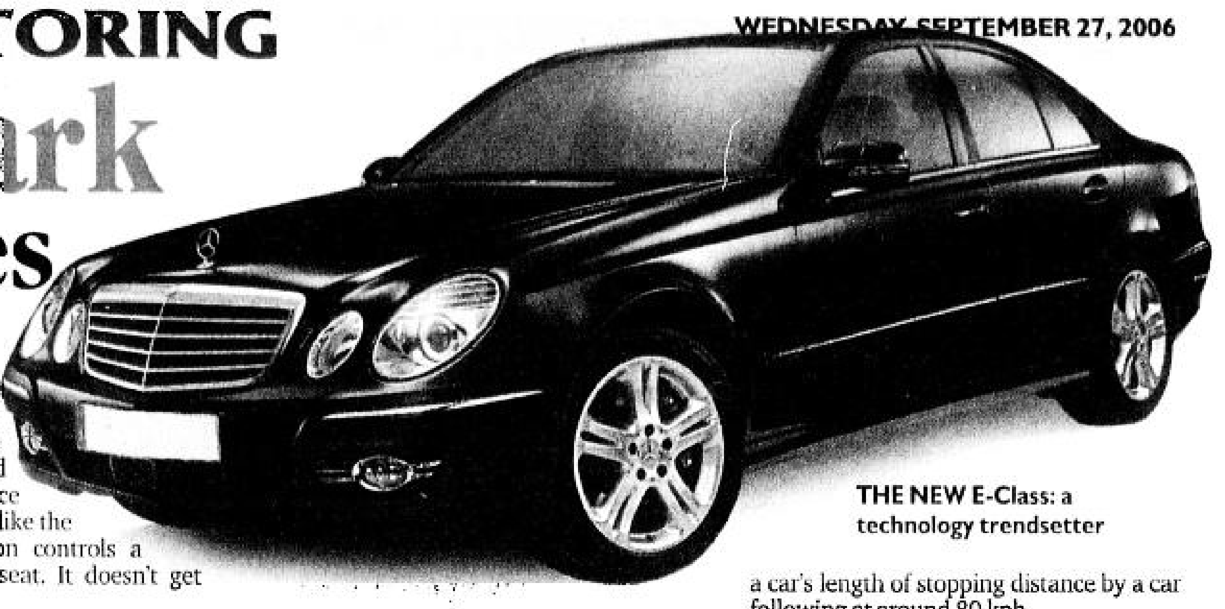


THE NEW E-Class: a technology trendsetter

By Charles E. Buban

IN THE EYES OF MANY CAR buyers worldwide, the E-Class in many ways epitomizes the Mercedes Benz brand.

Long been a cornerstone in the car brand's pantheon of models, the E-Class strikes a perfect balance of power, performance, style and luxury.

No wonder, the E-Class is Mercedes Benz's bestselling line—since 1946 the company has delivered almost 10 million of this luxury sedan to customers all over the world (the outgoing E-Class alone has sold over a million units since its launch in 2002).

"Every E-Class model delivers a combination of safety, luxury, performance, status and cost of operation that is difficult to match so it would be no surprise that the E-Class has remained an iconic car in a market segment crowded with excellent cars," said Felix Ang, president of CATS Motors Inc., the Philippine's exclusive distributor of the Mercedes Benz brand.

During the recent unveiling of the new generation E-Class held at the CATS Motors showroom in Bonifacio Global City in Taguig, Ang promised that the latest model upgrade will once again set the benchmark for the most desirable of luxury sedan.

Conservative changes in design

Design changes for the new E-Class remain conservative:

- Up front it now sports a slightly more prominent "V"-shaped grille that keeps it in tune with the new Mercedes Benz family look.
- The reshaped headlights now have transparent louvers on their top sections, producing a striking effect when switched on.
- For the first time extremely energy-efficient and longer-lasting light emitting diodes (LEDs) have been used as parking lights.

Inside, the new E-Class differs from the outgoing one. It now has new eye-catching color combinations, a new four-spoke steering wheel featuring elliptical thumb operated buttons and white-face gauges.

Some of the new E-Class controls are just plain brilliant. Take the power seat controls for example. Mounted on the door panel, they're easier to see and operate since they're arranged like the seat. Each button controls a segment of the seat. It doesn't get much simpler.

Outstanding safety level

"But most of the improvements and innovations done on the new E-Class are not apparent to the eye. Most significantly, it debuts Mercedes Benz's first extensive use of lightweight aluminum body panels and chassis components in volume production, including the hood, front fenders, deck lid, front and rear subframes, and more," informed Jurgen Banken of DaimlerChrysler who is also E-Class overall design chief.

Banken, who flew in from Stuttgart, Germany to personally introduce the new luxury sedan to the local media, explained that the extensive use of aluminum makes the E-Class lighter and more rigid.

Safety features

He added that a collection of safety features allows Mercedes Benz to make the claim that the new E-Class has more safety innovations than any other car in its market segment today. "The new E-Class is equipped as standard with the anticipatory Pre-Safe system whose 'reflexes' respond before an impending collision by activating protection measures for the driver and front passenger," Banken explained.

If the new E-Class radar sensor predicts an impending collision, the Pre-Safe cinches the front seatbelt pretensioners and even change the position of the front passenger seat for optimal protection.

The new generation E-Class is also equipped with an adaptive brake light, which flashes when the car is under rapid or panic braking. Banken explained that a flashing light is found to attract a following driver's attention faster—enough to shave a car's length of stopping distance by a car following at around 80 kph.

"And if struck from the rear, the cars' sensor-controlled (called Neck-Pro) headrests activate forward to help lessen the impact of whiplash, or other neck- and head-related injuries," Banken added.

Indeed, with Mercedes Benz's continuous model upgrades and CATS Motor's most competitive offers, Ang believes that the new E-Class will lead Mercedes Benz's record-breaking momentum it has generated in recent years worldwide as well as in the Philippines.

CATS Motors informed that it will offer the new E-Class in four trim levels here in the country: the E 200 Kompressor (available in the Classic trim at P3.880 million and Elegance trim at P4.125 million); and the E 280 (available in the Elegance Sport trim at P4.880 million and Avantgarde Sport trim at P5.125 million).

5.6-M km endurance test, 8,000 builders, 300 crash tests

By Tessa R. Salazar

WHAT DO CAR ENGINEERS DO WITH their newly designed cars before mass producing them? They work 'em to the ground until they run just right.

German engineers for Mercedes Benz have been designing luxury vehicles that are now more "agile" but do not sacrifice long-distance comfort. That is easier said than done, of course, and it takes all the years of experience of these engineers, and lots of trials on prototypes before the right "mix" of performance and comfort is achieved.

So, have the motorheads at Mercedes Benz finally achieved the perfect balance? Thirty-five-year-old German engineer Jurgen Banken, project head of the E-Class and the head of the variant's natural gas technology vehicles, visited the Philippines recently to launch the new Mercedes Benz E-Class, and possibly shed some answers on the question.

Test run

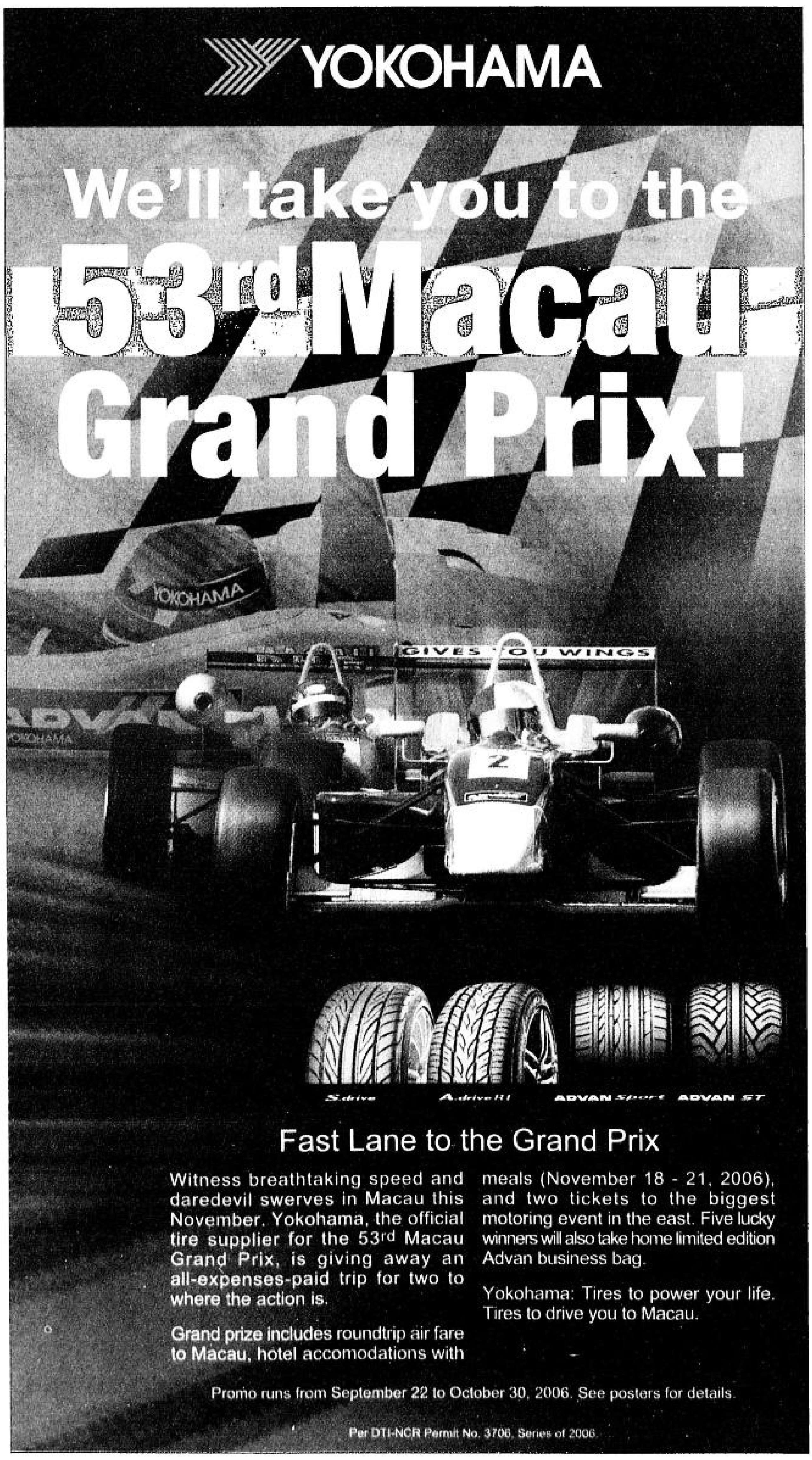
He disclosed that the different prototypes of the E-Class were test run for about 5.6-million km on all kinds of road conditions around the world—from Sweden to Africa—to make sure that all road conditions and climates were considered. That's more than seven round trips between the Earth and the moon.

According to him, about 300 crash tests were conducted for the E-Class since 2002. These crash tests, he said, were done to fulfill various European and American legal and safety requirements.

And after everything was run to the ground or smashed into a wall, everything had to be built and put together again, so to speak. And for this, Jurgen said, 8,000 people at the factory worked to build the E-Class at the assembly line, and the smallest part was accounted for.

"It was intense. If we forgot one screw, 8000 people would just stand there with nothing to do," he revealed.

The new E-Class has over 2,000 changes—major and minor modifications—from its direct predecessor.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Promo runs from September 22 to October 30, 2006. See posters for details.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3706, Series of 2006.

MOTORSCOPE

RP to host world meet of road engineers, experts

THE PHILIPPINES WILL FINALLY HOST THE PRESTIGIOUS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE Road Engineering Association of Asia and Australasia (REAAA).

The conference will gather over a thousand participants at the Philippine International Convention Center from Nov. 20 to 24, according to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), which leads in the preparations for the country's historic hosting of the event.

"The participants will come from REAAA's 26-member countries in the South Pacific region and the rest of the world, including the Philippines," said DPWH Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane.

REAAA president Salvador Pleyto holds the distinction of being the first Filipino president of the REAAA's governing council and will preside over its 81st and 82nd meeting during the event.

At the same time, there will be a meeting of the Heads of Road Authorities (Hora) comprising the ministers and secretaries of public works departments of various governments worldwide.

There will also be a grand exhibit of road engineering products, services and technologies of local and foreign governments, contractors, suppliers, and allied industries from all over the world.

"The international exhibit will thus be a great opportunity for Philippine-based firms and entrepreneurs to showcase their products and expertise and make good business during its five-day run and beyond," Ebdane pointed out.

Throngs of road engineering professionals, suppliers, contractors, businessmen and government and corporate executives worldwide are expected to join the event as 200 technical papers from 30 countries will be presented during its four days of technical sessions.

"The technical papers are classified into 14 relevant topics for presentation. Moreover, keynote addresses are scheduled daily and presented by prominent experts in Asia, Australasia and other parts of the world who will share their state-of-the-art technologies and lessons learned from various project engagements," Pleyto explained.

The meetings are organized and cosponsored by the Road Engineering Association of the Philippines (REAP) and the REAAA-Philippine Chapter.

TOYOTA TURNS OVER PRIUS TO PHILIPPINE GOV'T

Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. turns over one Prius hybrid vehicle to the Philippine government during the opening of the 2nd World of Toyota Motor Show at Le Pavillon in Pasay City. Receiving the donation is President Macapagal-Arroyo. Toyota's donation of the Prius is a testimony of the company's support in the government's efforts in finding alternatives to increasing fuel prices in the country and in promoting public awareness on ecology-safe vehicles.

Sport Truck & Custom Car Show starts today

METRO MANILA'S HOTTEST LAST QUARTER MOTORING EVENT, THE 2006 SPORT TRUCK & CUSTOM Car Show opens today at the Megatrade Hall of SM Megamall B, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City.

Until Oct. 1, this year's show is expected to draw a bigger crowd with more competitors joining the event to compete for the best in each category and corporate exhibitors unveiling the latest automotive related products.

Awards to be given for both the sport truck and custom car competitions are the Best of Show, Best in Class and special awards. The custom car competition will also give awards for the Best Body Kit and other special awards. Special awards will also be given to the Best in Paint, Best Audio, Best Mural, Best Engine Display and the People's Choice.

Organized by Trade Show International Inc. (TSI), the motor racing-inspired event has become the mecca for sport truck, custom cars and motorsports enthusiasts bringing together under one roof, the most wildly modified sport trucks, SUVs, pickups, custom cars and race cars in the country. This is the show were monster trucks and gull-winged Hondas are the norm and not the exception.

It is also the show where a host of corporate exhibitors will launch their latest "go-fast" products to the motoring public such as the latest engine racing parts, circuit racing and off-road suspension parts, aero body kits, monster wheels and tires, NOS systems, free flow exhaust systems, racing seats, racing apparel, wild paint jobs, murals, mega sound and video systems, car care products and other allied services.

Another much-awaited event highlight is the search for Ms Sport Truck Show and Ms Custom Car Show. The search is open to all promo girls employed by the different corporate exhibitors for the event. Customizing and motorsport-related seminars are also scheduled during the 5-day event to be conducted by experts in the field.

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LIFESTYLE
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Fire in their hearts

FEARLESS firefighters. Saving lives is part of this *barkada*'s agenda.

Dapitan Fire and Rescue Volunteers have received the Coke Barkada Award

By Caitlin M. Poblador
2bU! Contributor

IT'S A LAZY SATURDAY AFTERnoon and you are looking for some fun. You gather up your friends and get out for a night of revelry. But before you enjoy the night, listen to this story.

The cast of this tale are ordinary young adults, just like you. They want to have fun, and like you, they want adventure. When they go out, they don't head to the nearest club or mall. Fire and danger are their destination. Meet the Dapitan Fire and Rescue Volunteers.

The amazing group of young men and women is the recipient of the Coke Barkada Award of the Ten Accomplished Youth Organizations (Tayo). Tayo is on its fourth year of recognizing youth organizations that make a real difference in the community.

The Coca-Cola Foundation, through its Coke Barkada program, shares the same goals as Tayo. Coke Barkada is the foundation's newest program that aims to harness the idealism and energy of the youth for positive social change.

Since last year, the Coke Barkada Award has been given to the organization or "barkada" with the passion and determination to make a difference.

Risky business

At their headquarters in Talayan Village, Quezon City, the Dapitan fire volunteers look like a regular *barkada* hanging out and shooting the breeze. But when the fire alarm breaks on the radio, they put on their helmets, jump on to their bright-red fire truck and rush in alarming speed to the fire incident.

Some would balk at the thought of risking their life for other people. More so when they do it for no charge at all, and get funds right out of their own pockets.

But these guys don't seem to mind. In fact they take pride in being called volunteer firefighters.

Dapitan volunteer Kenneth Kristoffer Evangelista said his face got burned at one time during a fire rescue in a noodle factory.

Asked why he continues to be a volunteer despite the dangers, he said he gets an adrenaline high helping other people. He said his injuries became a challenge for him to continue with his volunteer work. "When I recovered from my injuries, I told myself that it was because I still had a lot of people to help," he said.

In their down time, the volunteers play games at their headquarters, crack jokes and eat out, said Joseph Lim.

But, of course, when the distress call comes, all games stop.

In order to lessen risks, the volunteers train in safety measures. "Safety first is our basic SOP (standard operating procedure)," said volunteer Eric Madrid. "We also focus on communication and collaboration during fires."

Seeing the commitment and dedication of these young men, one is provoked into looking at oneself and thinking of what one could do for others.

But the volunteers said people don't have to be firefighters like them. Each could help others and contribute to the country's wellbeing in his or her own way.

Evangelista said young people should be involved in socio-civic activities. "Who else will help the government if not us?" he asked.

"The difference between adults and the youth is that adults do things because it's their job to do them. The youth do something because they are passionate about it. There's a big difference in loving what you do and just being obligated. When you love what you do, anything is possible."

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See mechanics posters for details
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3166 Series of 2006.

I was a rape victim

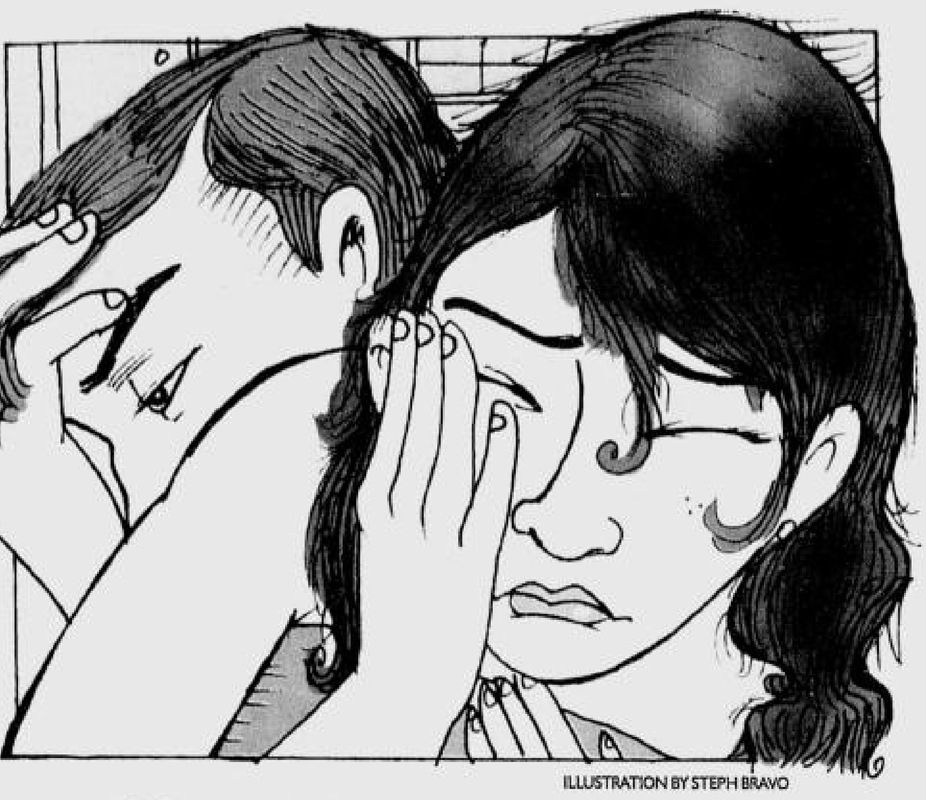

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

> Healing came through the goodness and support of my family and friends, and a spiritual retreat that showed no sorrow or hurt was too big to be undone by God's grace

By C. Agape

PEOPLE KNOW ME NOWADAYS as the girl who always smiles, who is very religious, who always goes out on a limb to help others, and who is brimming with optimism no matter what. Little do they know there's a reason behind that smile, a reason only a very few know about. I was a rape victim.

I was 14 years old then, a new transferee to an all-girls school. I found it hard to adjust since I was a quiet girl who was used to the company of boys because I was an only girl in the family and back in my elementary days, I always hung out with the boys. I found it very hard to make friends and I thought the girls in my school were rather too *maarte* and stuck-up so whatever companionship I needed, I tried to find elsewhere—like the Internet.

It was on the Internet where I met Brian. He was four years older than I was and he seemed really nice, sweet, and I was happy I found someone who would listen to my thoughts. We chatted till the wee hours of the morning which carried over to the phone and soon we were already planning to meet.

Since my parents were very strict, we made a plan. He'd pick me up from school in the afternoon, go to his place and hang out, then he'd bring me back to school a few hours. I'd tell my parents I'd be staying a bit late in school because I needed to catch up on my schoolwork.

The plan went to inaction and he picked me and took me to his place. Little did I know he was planning something else other than just hang out.

When we got to his place, he showed me his bedroom. He then tried to undo my underwear, saying "*Eto lang*." He took off his pants, and to my surprise, he had a condom on, and he proceeded to force himself on me. I struggled and resisted, but since he was stronger and taller, I couldn't do anything but cry and let it happen. After it was done, he brought me back to school. He was saying sorry, but I was too numb to speak or act.

When I got home my mom saw my bloodied skirt and I just told her I had my period that day. I quickly went to my room, too stunned to cry or react. What was a 14-year-old to do?

I blamed myself for everything that happened because, after all, it was my decision to sneak out. I feared that if I told my mom things would get worse and they'd be stricter than ever. I couldn't tell anyone in my family and I didn't have a set of friends back then so I kept it all to myself.

Brian kept on calling me weeks after that and asking me to go to his place again but I felt so bad so I stopped talking to him and never returned his calls.

Trauma

I got depressed after that incident and almost stopped eating altogether. I would just eat a banana for breakfast and nearly gave up dinner. I always locked myself in my room and cried all the time. I had thoughts of wanting to die since I thought I had nothing else to live for. I thought of slashing my pulse, overdosing on pills; I even researched on harmless drugs that, when taken together, could be very lethal.

What stopped me then from killing myself was the physical pain that I might feel and the thought that if I failed, I'd have to face the shame. I lost 35 pounds in three months.

I also let my grades slip and failed in a lot of subjects, even seemingly easy subjects like Filipino and Christian Living.

Polyps

My problems weren't over because, after that ordeal, I stopped having my period. I was scared that I had gotten pregnant

I got my period back three months later, but kept on bleeding for more than a week. This happened every period after that. A lot sometimes, losing so much blood, I'd faint in school.

I went to see a gynecologist. She discovered I had polyps in my uterus which was perhaps caused by the stress I had been going through. Since I was too young to undergo surgery to have them removed, she gave me iron supplements to help my anemia from the blood loss and hormones to regulate the bleeding, but they didn't really help a lot since the polyps were still there and I continued to lose a lot of blood every time I had my period.

I continued keeping to myself, shunning everyone, and people started to notice. But my family thought I was just going through a phase so they let me be. In school, people thought I was just the quiet one who wanted to be alone so they too just let me be.

Healing

On Christmas that year, six months after my traumatic experience, I received a book from my *kuya* called "Being Happy" by Andrew Matthews. I was touched by the dedication he wrote on the book. Although my brother didn't know the cause and the extent of my sadness and depression, although he didn't know what was happening, he said he would always be there to help and he loved me.

I read the book and it helped a lot in my outlook. In reading it I realized that I was not a victim of this world and my happiness was my decision. I could be happy. I realized I had to do something. It was the start of my healing. From there I decided that I would put that horrible experience behind me and I would try to be happy.

At home, though I never told my family about what happened, I tried coming out of my room more and interacting more with them. In school I focused on studying and opening up more to other people.

Abut nine months later, I was walking along the school corridor and realized something. Perhaps it was grace but at that moment I just felt the coolness of the air and the beauty of my surroundings. At that moment, though nothing had happened externally, I had a life-changing realization.

I realized that I had no reason to be so down, that though I had lost my virginity to someone I barely knew and let alone care about, I was very lucky I had a good family, caring parents who sent me to a good school, and that was a big enough blessing. Though I had lost something important to me, I was alive and had so many other things to be thankful for.

I continued reaching out more and it was by this time I found a set of friends who, though I had never told them of my ordeal, happily accepted me for who I was, quiet, shy and all. From there I started feeling happy about myself.

Retreat

What completed my healing was a retreat I attended a year-and-a-half after the incident where I felt how much God loved me and I confessed to a priest about everything that happened.

At first I was scared he would judge me because I was young and I wasn't a virgin anymore, but he told me what happened to me wasn't entirely my fault and that whatever sins I had done, whatever feelings of uncleanliness I had, didn't matter to God, who loves me. He told me that no mistake, no sorrow is too big not to be undone my God's grace.

After that retreat, it felt like a big weight was lifted from my shoulders. Miraculously, too, after that retreat, my gynecologist was surprised that the polyps were no longer there. It was then I realized God had healed me both inside and out.

I'm 23 now and it has been almost nine years since. I've long accepted what had happened to me and I'd happily tell anyone who wishes to know since it was a turning point in my life.

Only a few friends know about it though. I once shared it in a retreat with girls I barely knew because I know not all people are ready to know that part of me and the usual reactions are the same: pity.

I refuse to let people have pity on me though. I've realized that although there are things I have lost, I have so many other things to be happy about and, beyond that, I've discovered my faith which is more important than anything I have lost.

E-mail the author at carms.agape@gmail.com.

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BURN, THE HOTTEST MUSIC and lifestyle magazine to hit the Philippines, will be giving you the biggest party of the year! On Sept. 28, 5 p.m., be at the Music Hall of the SM Mall of Asia for "Burn, Baby, Burn: The Burn Music Magazine Launch Concert."

Enjoy an amazing and diverse array of performers that include reggae acts and rock-tastic bands, soul singers and spoken-word performers, jazz hounds and bossa-nova beauties.

Bamboo, Orange and Lemons, Imago, Barbie Almalbis, Pupil, Sitti, Sugarfree, Hemp Republic, Up Dharma Down, Radioactive Sago Project, Spy, Johnny Alegre, Itchyworms, Hale, Sino Sikat?, Nina, Kamikazee, 6CycleMind, Chillitees, Moonstar88 and other exciting bands will be performing at the launch.

Get in for free just by presenting the latest issue of Burn—the August-September issue, with either Gary Valenciano or the Red Hot Chili Peppers on the cover.

Get a chance to win awesome prizes, including an Ibañez GRX 40 electric guitar with an amplifier, courtesy of Audiophile.

So mark your calendars people, and celebrate with us!

Helping Burn in the much-awaited launch are SM Mall of Asia, Audiophile, Colt 45, Xtreme Magic Sing, MPIO and Bratpack. In cooperation with Gerry's Grill, M1, Tower Records, Hero, Jack TV, Wave 89.1, NU107, 105.1, Jam 88.3, 103.5 Klite, Hinge INQUIRER Publications, and the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Doña's big blowout

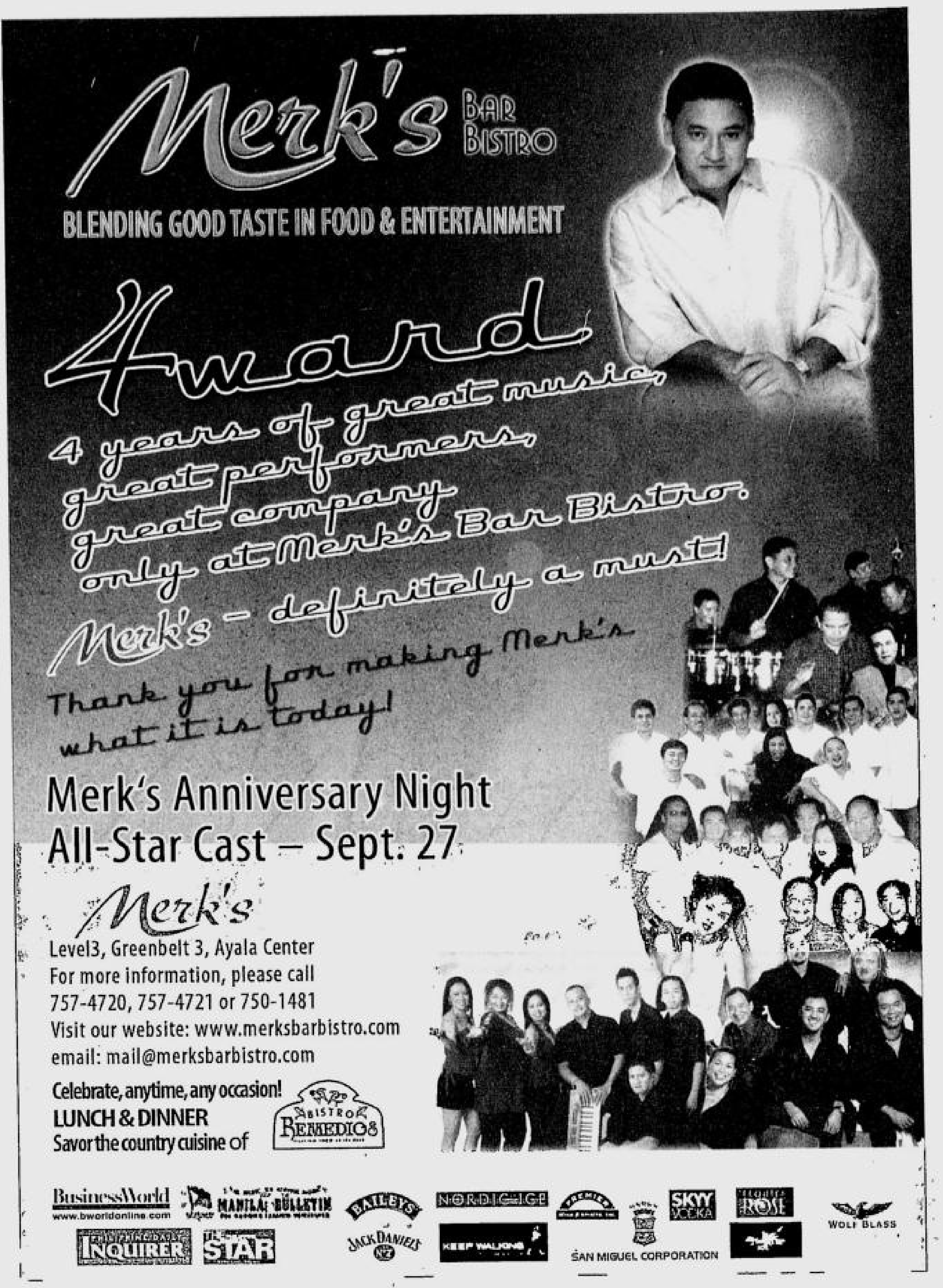
SHOPAHOLICS MUST HAVE BEEN VERY good boys and girls this year, because Christmas is still months away but they already received early Christmas treats.

The Doña Consolacion Building's first anniversary Big Blowout Sale last weekend offered Christmas shopping in September—minus the mind-numbing traffic, irate sales ladies and long lines that delay your shopping gratification.

The shopping bug was alive and active at the place, leaving even those who had no intention of spending a cent with shopping bags in their hands. Who could resist the temptation when countless fabulous items from specialty shops—Nullah, Sy Kat Couture, AB Fit Jeans, Fibre Design Collection, Selah The Music Basement, Shoe Bi-Do, Beyond Bamboo, Raan Coffee and Dessert, Tilka and Choice _Expression Gallery— were being sold at only 50 percent of their original price?

Indeed, it was a blowout sale like no other. Students of Selah The Music Basement presented a mini-show for the guests, who were all enjoying the cocktails.

What used to be fashionistas' best-kept secret is now one of Makati's favorite shopping hubs. Located at 122 Jupiter St., Bel-Air, Makati, Doña Consolacion Building is truly the one-stop shop for all you shopping needs —for your home, your wardrobe, shoe fetish, music or art collection.



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Animé forever

Animax celebrates youth power with a fresh, new look

By Angela V. Ignacio
2bU! Contributor

CAN YOU SAY "OTAKU"? Not even the heavy downpour dampened the spirits of true blue animé aficionados as they trooped to the recent Animax Sundown Party held at the Hotel Philippine Plaza's Bayside Harbor Tent. It was an evening of fun, fashion and—what else—animé goodies galore.

To kick off the night's festivities, champion beatboxer Element No. 5 wowed the crowd with his astounding one-man-band renditions of pop songs. Local bands Boy Elroy, Day One and Rocksteddy also provided some hard ear candy and brought the house down with their searing brand of rock music.

Games included a wacky cross-dressing race where whoever donned clothes from the opposite sex the fastest won, and a runway walk-off where eager young fashionistas strutted their stuff on the ramp in true Zoolander-meets-Pinoy-otaku (Japanese term for fan) fashion.

Lucky raffle and contest winners were awarded awesome prizes such as an Xda O2 unit and gorgeous charm bracelets from Miladay. jewelry, as well as countless animé merchandise.

Tantra booths were also set up at the side of the stage, where Online RPG addicts could play to their heart's content.

Meanwhile, show-biz followers had the chance to schmooze with young celebs like Cogie Domingo, Pauleen Luna, Brad Turvey and the cast of "Pinoy Big Brother Teen Edition."

The highlight of the night was a fashion show featuring hip but wearable outfits by Penshoppe, Levi's, YRYS and I Love You Store in themes inspired by some of Animax's latest offerings: "Initial D Fourth Stage," "Paradise Kiss," "Honey and Clover," and "Black Jack."

The show proved that you didn't need to sport purple Rapunzel-like locks or lug around *katanas* to pull off the animé look. (For the record, the characters in the aforementioned animé series dress like normal people. Well, sort of.)

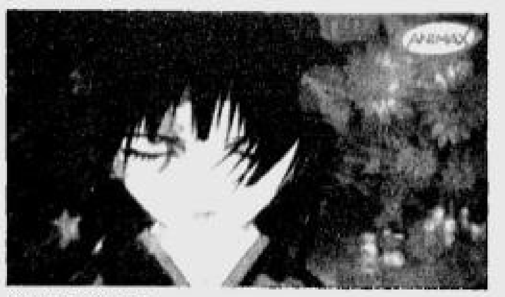
New tricks

Who says animé is just for kids? Definitely not us. Animax is set on backing up its slogan, "Animé for Everyone," with new tricks and out-of-the-box ideas, with this event being just the tip of the iceberg.

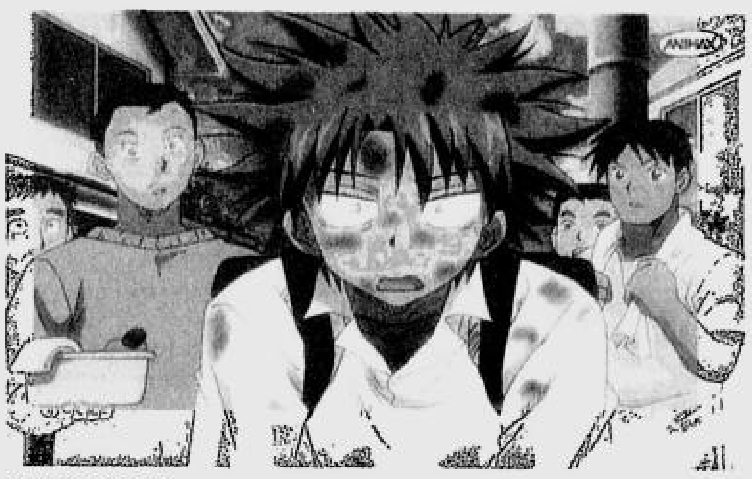
"This party gives viewers a unique opportunity to experience the big animation buzz firsthand and get into the Animax Refresh lifestyle, which is fun and edgy," explained Betty Tsui, vice president of Animax, Programming and Production, SPE Networks-Asia.

Animax Refresh, which is the channel's revamped image, aims to cater to an even broader range of viewers: the young adult crowd aged 15-24, as well as the young at heart with a penchant for compelling and beautifully crafted animation with more mature themes.

So before your parents reprimand you for watching cartoons at the age of, say, 30, invite them to sit and watch with you. Who knows? They just might get hooked, too.



"HELL GIRL"



"LAW of Ueki"

HOT NEW ANIMÉ

'Black Jack'

From the great Osamu Tezuka, creator of the well-loved Astroboy series, comes a dark, brooding (and sometimes humorous) tale of a mysterious antihero with heart and soul. Black Jack is a rogue surgeon whose unearthly powers of healing and outrageous service fees attract patients of all kinds to his doorstep.

'Yukikaze'

As a malevolent race of aliens continues to wreak havoc upon Earth, Lieutenant Rei Fukai and his high-tech reconnaissance fighter plane Yukikaze become humanity's last hope for survival. This sci-fi action thriller won Best OVA (Original Video Animé) at the 5th Tokyo Animé Awards 2006.

'Hell Girl'

Enma Ai is a young girl whose eerie powers are the stuff of urban legend. All it takes is for you to post your grudge on the Net at the stroke of midnight, and she'll come to send your tormentor to hell right away. One catch: Your soul goes with him, too. Not only is it chilling, but it's laced with heavy emotions and a poignant storyline. Still, better watch it in broad daylight.

'Law of Ueki'

When God gets tired of being God, it's time to find a replacement, fast. Clumsy Kousuke Ueki is unwittingly chosen by God Candidate Kobayashi as his "Power User," which means he has to fight in the greatest tournament in the whole of Creation. His ability? He can turn trash into trees. Now, if only we all had that power here...

'Teenage Goddess'

A winner of the Excellence Award at the 2005 Japan Media Arts Festival, "Teenage Goddess" tells the lighthearted tale of Yurie Hitotsubashi, who struggles with everyday life while trying to find out what to do with her newfound divinity. Funny and endearingly cute, it's something your little sisters would hog the TV for, but this time, you wouldn't mind it if they did.

'Honey and Clover'

Those who love shoujo manga or comics for girls (and boys, too—come on, admit it) have this series as their current staple. Yuuta, Shinobu and Takumi are three college roommates with a taste for plastic food and pretty girls. When beautiful, talented Hagumi enters their lives, their lives take a serious—and hilarious—turn for the worst. Or is it for the better? Lots of tongue-in-cheek, but not in-your-face, humor.

'Paradise Kiss'

Another widely favored manga-turned-animé series, "Paradise Kiss" lets you peek into the finicky, fast-paced world of fashion school in the eyes of 18-year-old Yukari, a jaded student who discovers a new life (and love) in the modeling business. Probably not for younger audiences due to some adult scenes, but heck, the outfits are totally out of this world. We mean it.

Tune in to Animax (Skycable channel 46) for respective schedules.

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- **Thursday Sept. 28, 4-6pm** - INTER-ED, Makati - **Tel: 819-10-01**
- **Friday Sept. 29, 3-5pm** - IDP Education, Makati - **Tel: 816-07-55** (local) 104, 109, 110

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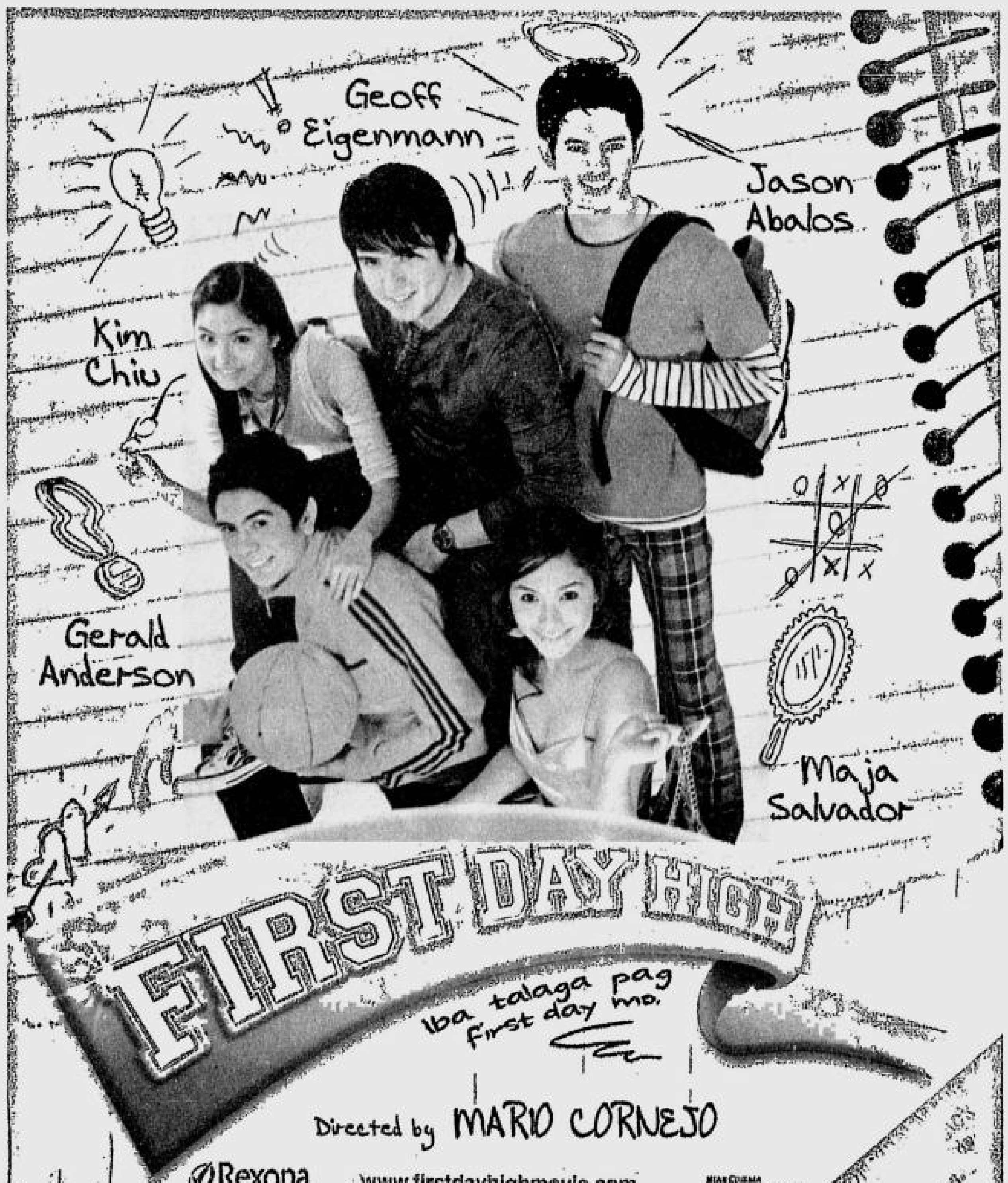

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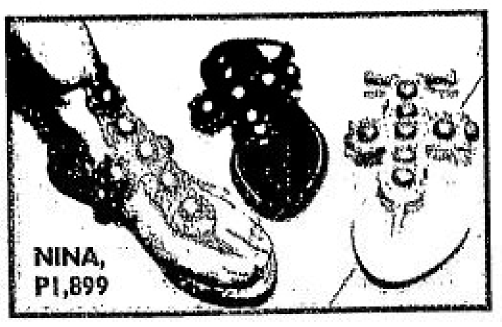
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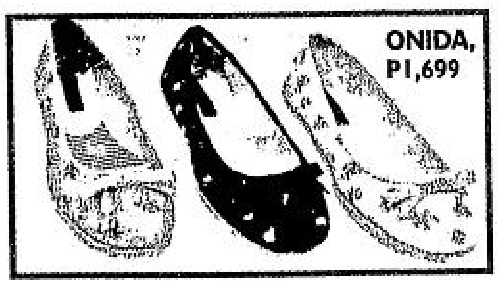
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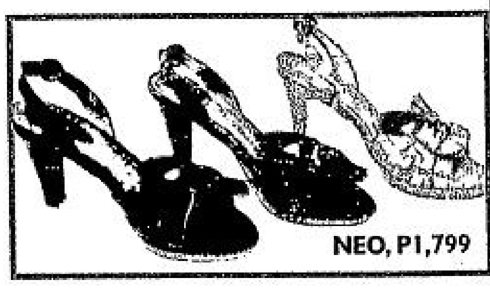
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Shoe shop for a cause

Text by Pam Pastor
Photos by Rodel Rotoni

IT HAS LONG BEEN OUR dream to put together the logos of two of 2bU!'s regular sections—Fashion Freaks and Change the World.

This little dream is just part of an even bigger one—to have local retailers take the plunge and offer "philanthropic shopping."

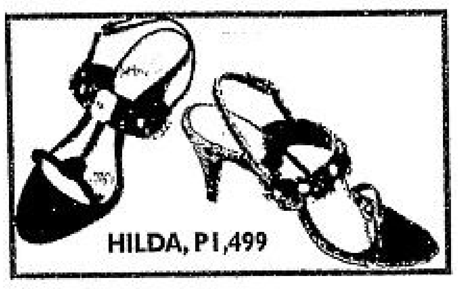
Macy's did it in the US last week with its Shop for a Cause campaign, for the benefit of the American Heart Association.

In the UK, Miss Selfridge released special limited-edition Havaianas earlier this year, donating 5 pounds for every pair sold to Lavender Trust, a breast cancer charity.

The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation offers web-savvy shoppers a whole slew of items on their websites, all to encourage people to "shop for the cure."

And because next month is Breast Cancer Awareness month, Vanity Fair's October issue is expected to highlight favorite items that will benefit cancer research—from Design-Her Gals stationery and Bedhead Pajamas to a Cartier Love Bracelet and Annick Goutal's La Rose Candle.

Celebrities have been doing it for a few years now—donating their clothes to be sold to fans through Clothesoffourback.org, an organization that arranges online charity auctions for the benefit of children's charities.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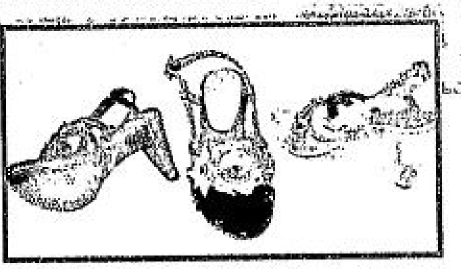
ODINA, P1,899

LOLA, P1,999

Guilt-free shopping

And now, thanks to Schu, one of 2bU!'s favorite shoe stores, shoppers in the Philippines can enjoy the benefits of shoe-shopping for a cause.

"I wanted to do something different," says Ruby Gan, COO and president of ShopManila Inc. and an advocate of women's causes.

By "different," she means forming partnerships with Team Manila, a graphic design group that is inspired by the urban lifestyle, culture and the city, and Rock Ed Philippines, a volunteer group that wants to "rock society through alternative education" and aims to spread awareness through through music, the arts, poetry and more.

Sharing Rock Ed's belief that there are "No more excuses," and that everyone should do what they can to end poverty now, Schu created "Let's Edschucate," a campaign that encourages people to help, even by shopping.

Taking part in the campaign is simple. Shoppers can visit Schu's different branches (or even blogs and websites if they live outside Manila) and purchase any of the 10 special designs chosen for this project. The shoes are priced like they always are. Shoppers will get a free tote bag designed by Team Manila and 15 percent of the proceeds will go to Rock Ed Philippines.

"Do your share. Help the Philippines," says Ruby.

You get a great pair of shoes, a free bag and the satisfaction that you have supported art and have made a difference.

Now that's what we call guilt-free shopping.

Schu has branches at Glorietta 3, SM Mall of Asia, Megamall, Shangri-La Plaza Mall and Robinsons Galleria. Visit the Schu blogs at http://schushop.multiply.com, http://schushop.blogspot.com and http://schushop.spaces.msn.com

E-mail The Fashion Freaks at thefashionfreaks@yahoo.com.

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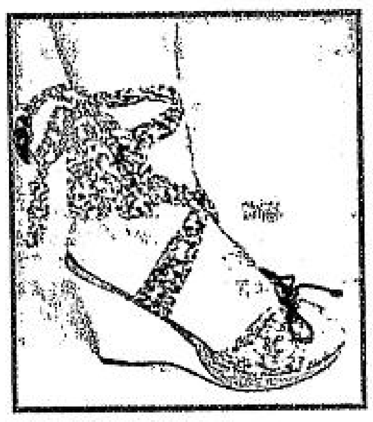
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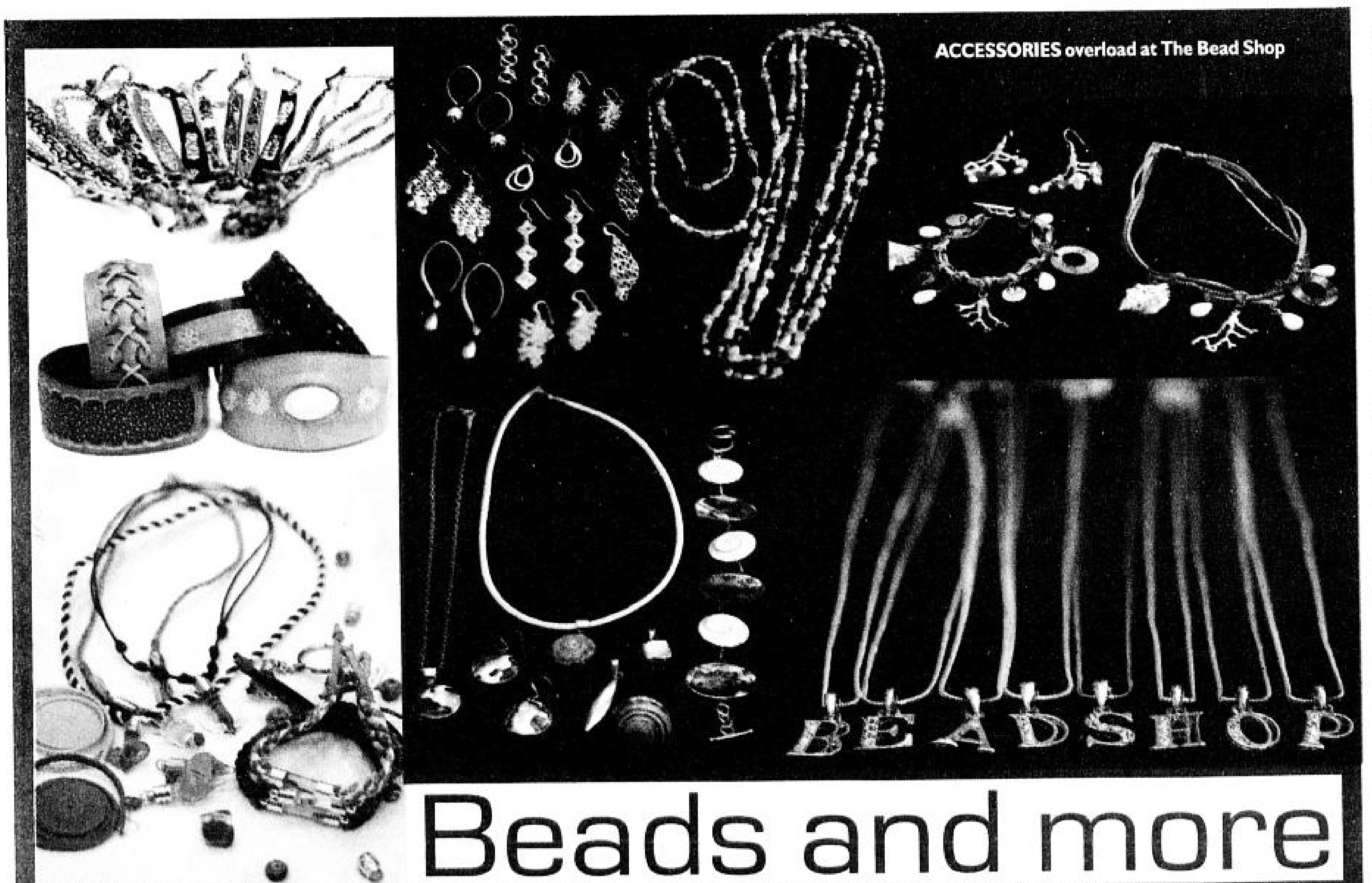

ACCESSORIES overload at The Bead Shop

Beads and more

Text by Pam Pastor
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

MAYBE IT WAS foresight. Or psychic power.

Somehow, years ago, the managing partners of The Bead Shop knew that accessories were going to be big. Really big.

And about a decade later, when the country is starting to feel like one big accessories shop with new designers emerging every day, The Bead Shop is still standing strong, with 16 branches offering unique creations and funky pieces to insatiable bauble-buyers.

Pinky Ortiz, one of the managing partners of The Bead Shop, finds people's obsession with accessories a good thing. "It's great that people are now very adventurous when it comes to accessories."

And the people behind The Bead Shop always makes sure it stays on top of trends, displaying fresh pieces that will appeal to shoppers with all kinds of tastes and budgets. "Right now, long necklaces and funky-colored pieces are our bestsellers. It took a while but gold is back, too."

Pinky says earrings are always a hot item, especially dangling ones because "they are flattering, slimming and they lengthen the face."

Pearls are Pinky's favorite. "I like pearls, mother-of-pearl, pearl with *abaca*, dressed-down pearls, multi-stranded pieces that you tie with a ribbon."

Other interesting offerings from The Bead Shop include antique pottery bracelets cast in silver made by American artist Jessica Lee, colorful pieces from their Groovy Baby line and their Aquatic collection, which consists of marine-inspired pieces.

A lot of their pieces are designed by Valerie Lopez, also a managing partner for The Bead Shop. Others are imported from the US, Mexico and other countries.

Personalized jewelry are hot as well. "We have vials in different shapes. Each shape has a meaning—wealth, freedom of spirit, to broaden your horizons, and people can pick a bottle. They can choose to write a message or their names on rice or a stick of pasta and choose the color of the oil for the vial."

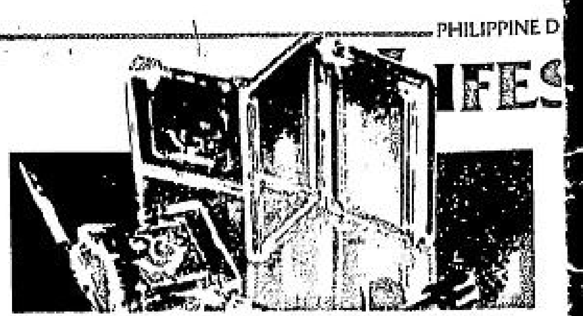
Although they are usually worn as a pendant, others have started using them as keychains and charms.

The Bead Shop has more things planned for accessories fans—whether your style is understated or funky.

There's no doubt about it, this bead shop is here to stay.

Visit The Bead Shop at SM North Edsa, SM Fairview, SM Megamall, SM Soutmall, SM Bacoor, SM Cebu, SM Manila, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Manila, Eastwood, Glorietta, Rockwell, Ayala Cebu and Sta. Lucia.

Do you want The Fashion Freaks to visit your store or check out your wares? E-mail us at thefashionfreaks@yahoo.com.


SHU UEMURA'S Fall/Winter Filigree collection

Myste

Text by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent
Photos by Monica Barretto

ONCE AGAIN, THE INCREASINGly chilly weather brings the darker and more mysterious hues of the Fall/Winter makeup collections. This year, makeup brands go for a metallic, smoky feel, with emphasis on the eyes.

The premier Japanese brand of makeup goes all out with glamour once again, this time with the Filigree collection. Inspired by delicate metalwork and lace, the overall look of Filigree is reminiscent of your grandmother's heirloom jewelry.

For the collection, the eyes take center stage. Try the Filigree eye shadows, which have muted metallic hues in ME Sepia, Brass Gold, Olive, Azure and Viridian.

Worth checking out are the color crayons in Flame Gold and Mystic Forest, soft sticks of pigment which can be used on the eyes, lips, or anywhere else on the face. The crayons can be used dry, or mixed with Shu Uemura's Depsea Water for more intense color.

There are two shades of blush in the Filigree collection: Antique Pink and Antique Orange. If you're going for a wine-flushed, candlelit glow, Antique Pink is the blush to get. Antique Orange gives a warmer hint of color, great for darker skin.

For the lips, there are two shades of lip color to choose from: Brick Gold, a rich red swirled with gold, and Beige Gold, a nude shade great with dramatic makeup. Both are housed in a lucite case, much like Shu Uemura's eye shadow.

MAC cosmetics also chose to ride the metallic trend with Avant Gold, one of its offerings for the season. The highlight of the collection is the Mineralized Skin Finish, a sun-baked cake of mineral powder for the eyes and cheeks.

Shooting Star, a caramel-colored blush with gold and dark brown veins, looks great on *morenas*; just use a light hand and a good brush to apply the blush, which has more pigment than the usual powder blushes.

Check out the Bright Side Gallery Gal eye shadow duo, which has champagne and olive brown hues which can be layered on for a smoky look, or applied lightly for school and work.

The gold theme is also seen in the Blonde on Blonde lipstick, a metallic hue that can be worn under a reddish lip gloss.

If you're looking for something less extreme, try out Ciao Manhattan, a sparkly coral gloss also from Avant Gold.

However, MAC lipglass lovers will be excited to know that a new set of glosses has just been released.

Plushglass, a less sticky version of the famous MAC lipglass, comes in 12 colors: our favorites are Plus Luxe, Full for You, Pretty Plush and Fulfilled (all in the feminine, shimmery pink-red family), Wet Wild Wonderful (a dark bronze shade) and Cushy White, a clear shade with micropearls to make your lips look fuller.

Real skinny

Shu Uemura has launched its latest batch of cleansing oils, called Shu Project by JT. Previously,

AN AVANT-GARDE [illegible] of Shu Uemura [illegible]

Somewh

SEVENTEEN FAVORITE MODEL SEARCH WINNER Ena de Guzman wanted to try out a new look without permanently changing her appearance. "I got a perm, but it dried out my hair," said the bubbly 19-year-old, who is a junior at the Ateneo de Manila University. "I want something fun without having to spend too much time on my looks."

2bU! got Claire and Ricky Diokno of Shu Uemura and Kiehl's Since 1851 to do Ena's makeover.

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The second makeover, an avant-garde look in-

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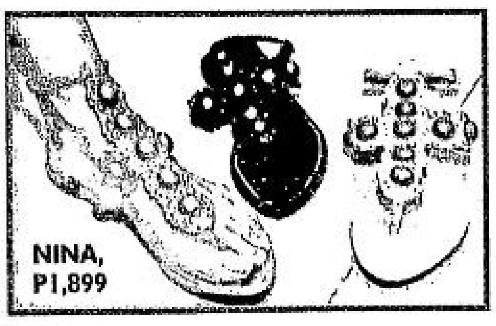
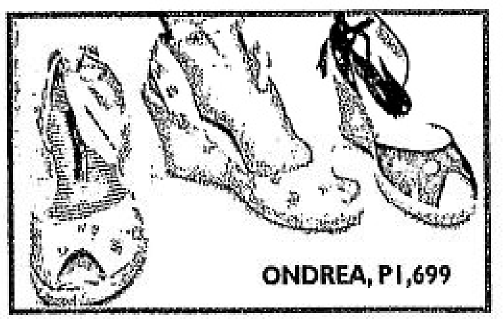
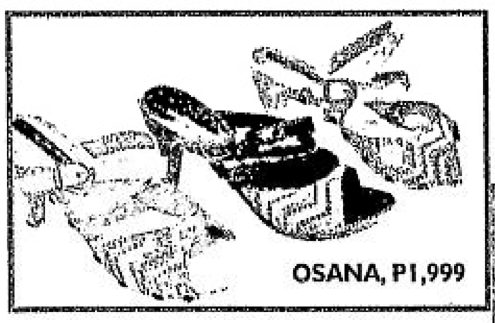
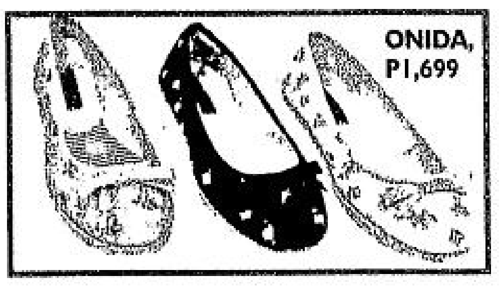
Buy footwear, get a free bag and support a great cause —now that's power-shopping

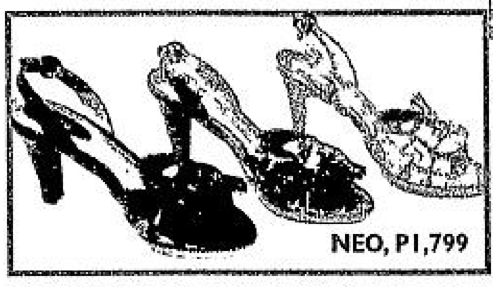

NINA, P1,899


ONDREA, P1,699


OSANA, P1,999

MARIA, P1,599


ONIDA, P1,699


NEO, P1,799

Shoe shop for a cause

Text by Pam Pastor
Photos by Rodel Rotoni

IT HAS LONG BEEN OUR dream to put together the logos of two of 2bU!'s regular sections—Fashion Freaks and Change the World.

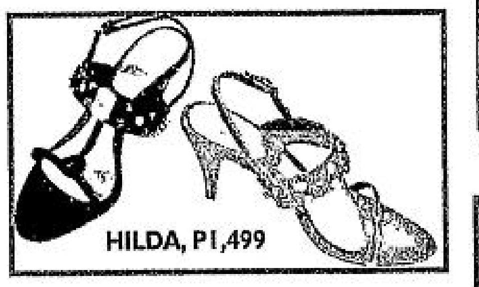
This little dream is just part of an even bigger one—to have local retailers take the plunge and offer "philanthropic shopping."

Macy's did it in the US last week with its Shop for a Cause campaign, for the benefit of the American Heart Association.

In the UK, Miss Selfridge released special limited-edition Havaianas earlier this year, donating 5 pounds for every pair sold to Lavender Trust, a breast cancer charity.

The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation offers web-savvy shoppers a whole slew of items on their websites, all to encourage people to "shop for the cure."

And because next month is Breast Cancer Awareness month, Vanity Fair's October issue is expected to highlight favorite items that will benefit cancer research—from Design-Her Gals stationery and Bedhead Pajamas to a Cartier Love Bracelet and Annick Goutal's La Rose Candle.


HILDA, P1,499

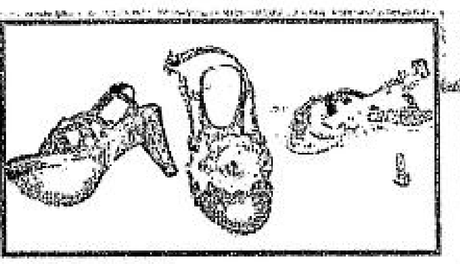
Celebrities have been doing it for a few years now—donating their clothes to be sold to fans through Clothesoffourback.org, an organization that arranges online charity auctions for the benefit of children's charities.

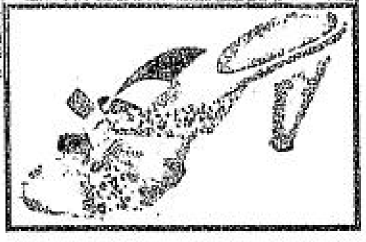
Guilt-free shopping

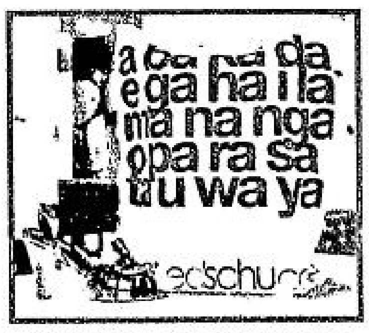
And now, thanks to Schu, one of 2bU!'s favorite shoe stores, shoppers in the Philippines can enjoy the benefits of shoe-shopping for a cause.

"I wanted to do something different," says Ruby Gan, COO and president of ShopManila Inc. and an advocate of women's causes.

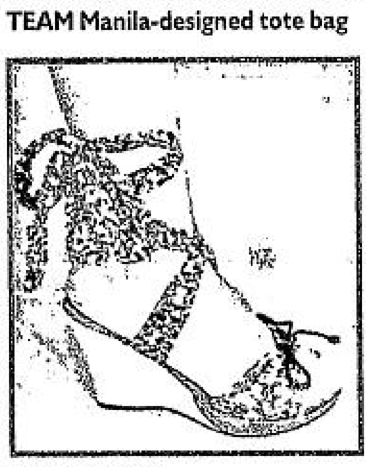
By "different," she means forming partnerships with Team Manila, a graphic design group that is inspired by the urban lifestyle, culture and the city, and Rock Ed Philippines, a volunteer group that wants to "rock society through alternative education" and aims to spread awareness through through music, the arts, poetry and more.


ODINA, P1,899


LOLA, P1,999



TEAM Manila-designed tote bag


KORY, P1,799

Sharing Rock Ed's belief that there are "No more excuses," and that everyone should do what they can to end poverty now, Schu created "Let's Edschucate," a campaign that encourages people to help, even by shopping.

Taking part in the campaign is simple. Shoppers can visit Schu's different branches (or even blogs and websites if they live outside Manila) and purchase any of the 10 special designs chosen for this project. The shoes are priced like they always are. Shoppers will get a free tote bag designed by Team Manila and 15 percent of the proceeds will go to Rock Ed Philippines.

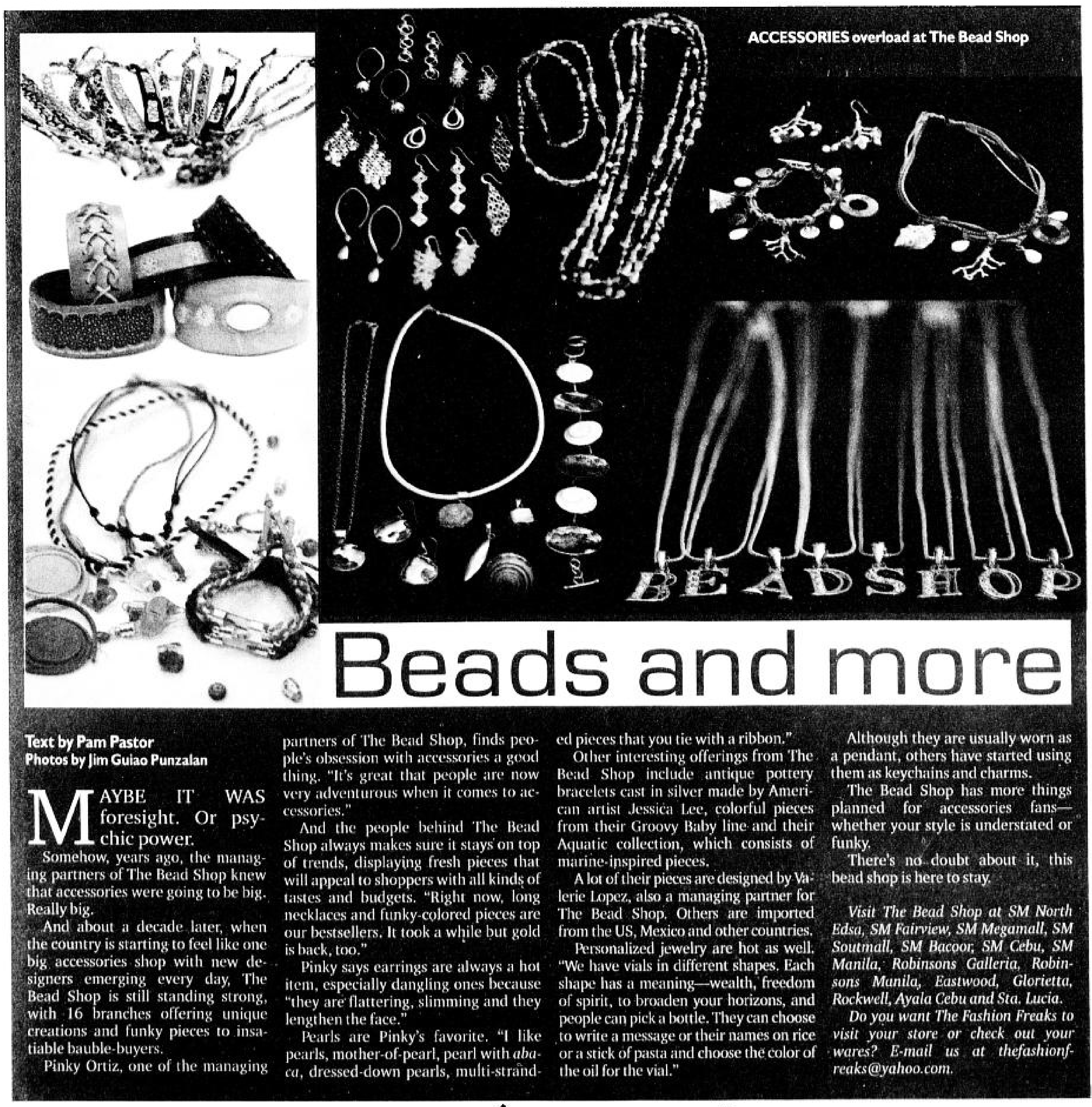
"Do your share. Help the Philippines," says Ruby.

You get a great pair of shoes, a free bag and the satisfaction that you have supported art and have made a difference.

Now that's what we call guilt-free shopping.

Schu has branches at Glorietta 3, SM Mall of Asia, Megamall, Shangri-La Plaza Mall and Robinsons Galleria. Visit the Schu blogs at http://schushop.multiply.com, http://schushop.blogspot.com and http://schushop.spaces.msn.com

E-mail The Fashion Freaks at thefashionfreaks@yahoo.com.



ACCESSORIES overload at The Bead Shop

Beads and more

Text by Pam Pastor
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

MAYBE IT WAS foresight. Or psychic power.

Somehow, years ago, the managing partners of The Bead Shop knew that accessories were going to be big. Really big.

And about a decade later, when the country is starting to feel like one big accessories shop with new designers emerging every day, The Bead Shop is still standing strong, with 16 branches offering unique creations and funky pieces to insatiable bauble-buyers.

Pinky Ortiz, one of the managing partners of The Bead Shop, finds people's obsession with accessories a good thing. "It's great that people are now very adventurous when it comes to accessories."

And the people behind The Bead Shop always makes sure it stays on top of trends, displaying fresh pieces that will appeal to shoppers with all kinds of tastes and budgets. "Right now, long necklaces and funky-colored pieces are our bestsellers. It took a while but gold is back, too."

Pinky says earrings are always a hot item, especially dangling ones because "they are flattering, slimming and they lengthen the face."

Pearls are Pinky's favorite. "I like pearls, mother-of-pearl, pearl with *abaca*, dressed-down pearls, multi-stranded pieces that you tie with a ribbon."

Other interesting offerings from The Bead Shop include antique pottery bracelets cast in silver made by American artist Jessica Lee, colorful pieces from their Groovy Baby line and their Aquatic collection, which consists of marine-inspired pieces.

A lot of their pieces are designed by Valerie Lopez, also a managing partner for The Bead Shop. Others are imported from the US, Mexico and other countries.

Personalized jewelry are hot as well. "We have vials in different shapes. Each shape has a meaning—wealth, freedom of spirit, to broaden your horizons, and people can pick a bottle. They can choose to write a message or their names on rice or a stick of pasta and choose the color of the oil for the vial."

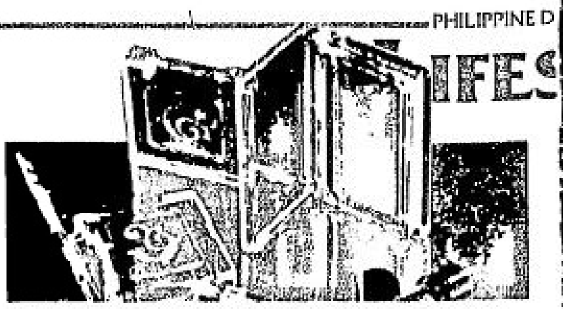
Although they are usually worn as a pendant, others have started using them as keychains and charms.

The Bead Shop has more things planned for accessories fans—whether your style is understated or funky.

There's no doubt about it, this bead shop is here to stay.

Visit The Bead Shop at SM North Edsa, SM Fairview, SM Megamall, SM Soutmall, SM Bacoor, SM Cebu, SM Manila, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Manila, Eastwood, Glorietta, Rockwell, Ayala Cebu and Sta. Lucia.

Do you want The Fashion Freaks to visit your store or check out your wares? E-mail us at thefashionfreaks@yahoo.com.


SHU UEMURA'S Fall/Winter Filigree collection

Myste

Text by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent
Photos by Monica Barretto

ONCE AGAIN, THE INCREASINGly chilly weather brings the darker and more mysterious hues of the Fall/Winter makeup collections. This year, makeup brands go for a metallic, smoky feel, with emphasis on the eyes.

The premier Japanese brand of makeup goes all out with glamour once again, this time with the Filigree collection. Inspired by delicate metalwork and lace, the overall look of Filigree is reminiscent of your grandmother's heirloom jewelry.

For the collection, the eyes take center stage. Try the Filigree eye shadows, which have muted metallic hues in ME Sepia, Brass Gold, Olive, Azure and Viridian.

Worth checking out are the color crayons in Flame Gold and Mystic Forest, soft sticks of pigment which can be used on the eyes, lips, or anywhere else on the face. The crayons can be used dry, or mixed with Shu Uemura's Depsea Water for more intense color.

There are two shades of blush in the Filigree collection: Antique Pink and Antique Orange. If you're going for a wine-flushed, candlelit glow, Antique Pink is the blush to get. Antique Orange gives a warmer hint of color, great for darker skin.

For the lips, there are two shades of lip color to choose from: Brick Gold, a rich red swirled with gold, and Beige Gold, a nude shade great with dramatic makeup. Both are housed in a lucite case, much like Shu Uemura's eye shadow.

MAC cosmetics also chose to ride the metallic trend with Avant Gold, one of its offerings for the season. The highlight of the collection is the Mineralized Skin Finish, a sun-baked cake of mineral powder for the eyes and cheeks.

Shooting Star, a caramel-colored blush with gold and dark brown veins, looks great on *morenas*; just use a light hand and a good brush to apply the blush, which has more pigment than the usual powder blushes.

Check out the Bright Side Gallery Gal eye shadow duo, which has champagne and olive brown hues which can be layered on for a smoky look, or applied lightly for school and work.

The gold theme is also seen in the Blonde on Blonde lipstick, a metallic hue that can be worn under a reddish lip gloss.

If you're looking for something less extreme, try out Ciao Manhattan, a sparkly coral gloss also from Avant Gold.

However, MAC lipglass lovers will be excited to know that a new set of glosses has just been released.

Plushglass, a less sticky version of the famous MAC lipglass, comes in 12 colors: our favorites are Plus Luxe, Full for You, Pretty Plush and Fulfilled (all in the feminine, shimmery pink-red family), Wet Wild Wonderful (a dark bronze shade) and Cushy White, a clear shade with micropearls to make your lips look fuller.

Real skinny

Shu Uemura has launched its latest batch of cleansing oils, called Shu Project by JT. Previously,

AVANT-GARDE [illegible]

Somewhe

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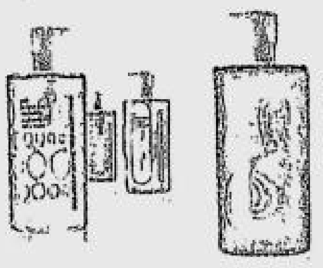
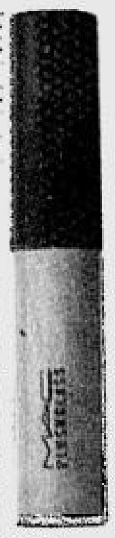
rious beauty

Fall/Winter cosmetics is metallic and smoky, with focus on the eyes



SHU Uemura cleansing oil bottles designed by John Tremblay



MAC Plushglass

it had commissioned artist Ai Yamaguchi to design its bottles of cleansing oil with Japanese-themed art. This time, John Tremblay, a graphic designer from New York, came up with "Optical Illusions," a collections of bottle designs that interact with the contents of the bottle.

Shu Uemura brand manager Tina Tinio said, "This year's collection is more sophisticated and subtle; to be able to appreciate the design, you have to see how it interacts with the oil."

VMV Hypoallergenics also came up with a new set for its Id skincare for men and women.

The Complete Clarifying Set, which carries the key products of the Id line, contains a facial cleanser, shaving cream, toner and aftershave, anti-acne exfoliating lotion, sweat acne gel, and clarifying soap.

The set is packaged in a convenient travel size to make it easy to tote (especially for guys who don't want to lug an enormous vanity case to the gym).

Id's collection has ingredients such as salicylic acid and beta-hydroxy for clearing up acne. If you must get one item from the set, make it the Swear Acne and Overall Anti-Bacterial Monolaurin Gel—it clears up zits in a jiffy, and can be used as a disinfectant and face mattifier.

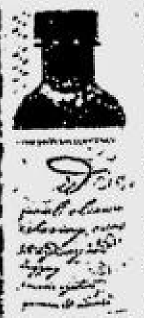
MAC'S Mineralized Skin Finish

VMV also came out with a new line of creme lipsticks, made to last long without drying out the lips. Also check out their Glow lip and cheek tint for a healthy, in-from-the-cold flush.

If hair is your concern, the Kerastase Nutridefense line might be your best bet. Good for dry and sensitized hair, the treatment includes a shampoo and rinse-out cream that provides vitamins for stressed-out locks.

You may also try the L'Oreal Vitamino range, which makes use of technology to keep colored hair from fading out quickly.

Make me over



VMV Id's Sweat Acne gel works miracles.

Fans who love Body Shop for its reasonable prices and good quality will be glad to know that the brand just got a makeover.

Aside from introducing new makeup products, it has also upgraded other lines and items with improved formulas and packaging.

Stock up on basics such as the lip and cheek tint, Body Shop's best-selling product. Now in a more solid gel form, the lip and cheek tint is easier to blend and comes in a redder, just-pinched shade as opposed to the old pink formula.

If you still prefer powder, try the Apricot Shimmer blush for sun-kissed cheeks, and Tinted Glow Enhancer to look iridescent.

KÉRASTASE Nutridefense

Also check out the Liquid Lip Colors, eye shadows (Spearmint, a sea-green color, looks young and fresh), and Brush on Bronze beads.

Maybelline New York has also released its Skyline Wines collection, which concentrates on wine and berry colors for the season.

"For Skyline Wines, the skin is porcelain-doll flawless, while the eyes, lips and cheeks are flushed with berry and plum," said Barbi Chan, makeup artist for Maybelline. "Wine colors work beautifully with every skin tone."

Check out the Color Wear Trios eye shadow in Tenderness and Winter Touch, and Moisture Extreme lipsticks in Plush Orchid and Lustrous Lilac.

RESH-FACED Ena de Guzman in natural [illegible]

new look

spired by the Victorian era, makes use of full false lashes, heavy eye makeup, and bouffant hair.

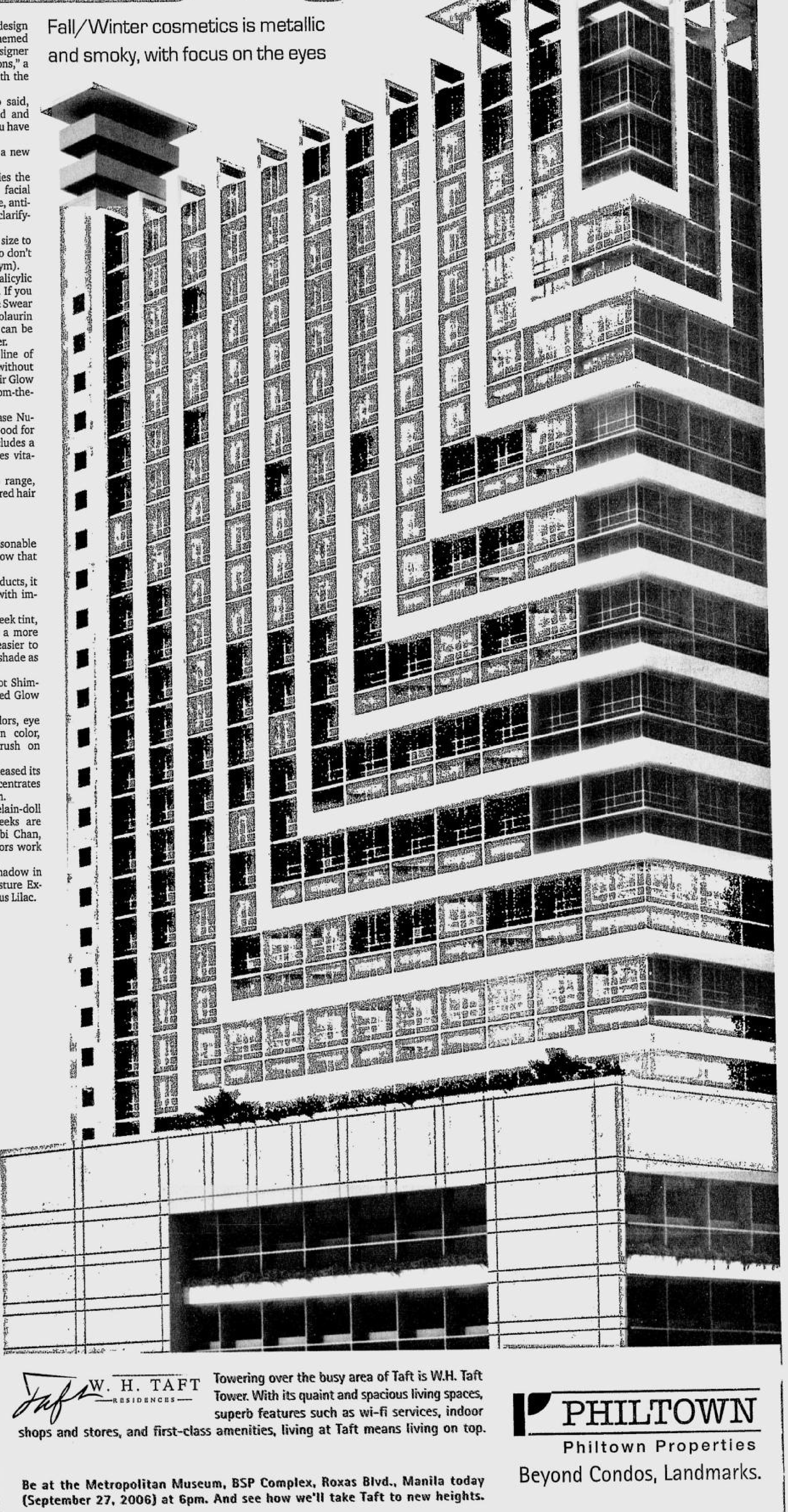
A toned-down version of this look can be worn to parties or events. Just concentrate on one key area to avoid going over the top. If you're using full false lashes and bright eye makeup, keep the rest of your look neutral.

Claire used a combination of several Filigree Color Crayon Trios and eye shadows on Ena's eyes, and tinted her lips with a dark red color.

Meanwhile, Ricky teased Ena's hair into a gravity-defying beehive.

The result? A mysterious, semi-gothic look very different from Ena's usual clean and fresh style.

"It's like playing dress-up," said Ena, who played her Queen Victoria role to the hilt. "But at the end of the day, I can go back to being myself."



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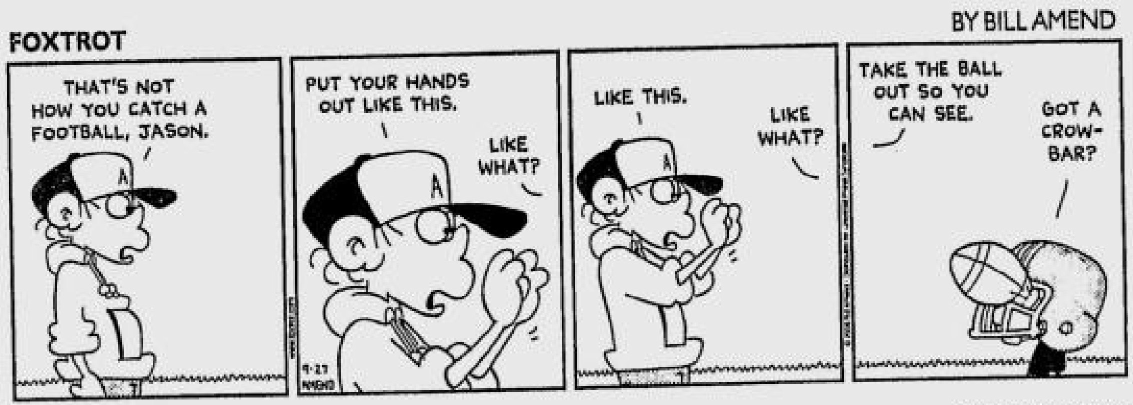
ComicRelief

e-mail feedback at arts@inquirer.com.ph

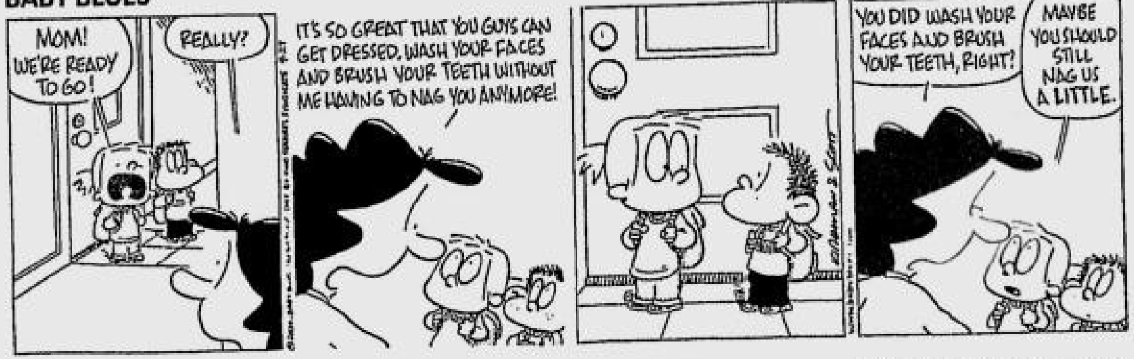
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


THAT'S NOT HOW YOU CATCH A FOOTBALL, JASON.
PUT YOUR HANDS OUT LIKE THIS.
LIKE WHAT?
LIKE THIS.
LIKE WHAT?
TAKE THE BALL OUT SO YOU CAN SEE.
GOT A CROW-BAR?
9-27
AMEND

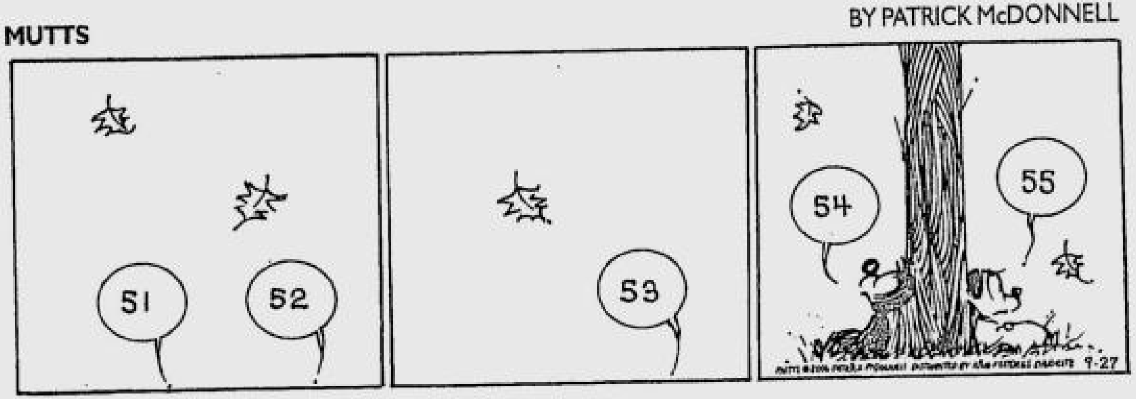
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


MOM! WE'RE READY TO GO!
REALLY?
IT'S SO GREAT THAT YOU GUYS CAN GET DRESSED, WASH YOUR FACES AND BRUSH YOUR TEETH WITHOUT ME HAVING TO NAG YOU ANYMORE!
YOU DID WASH YOUR FACES AND BRUSH YOUR TEETH, RIGHT?
MAYBE YOU SHOULD STILL NAG US A LITTLE.

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL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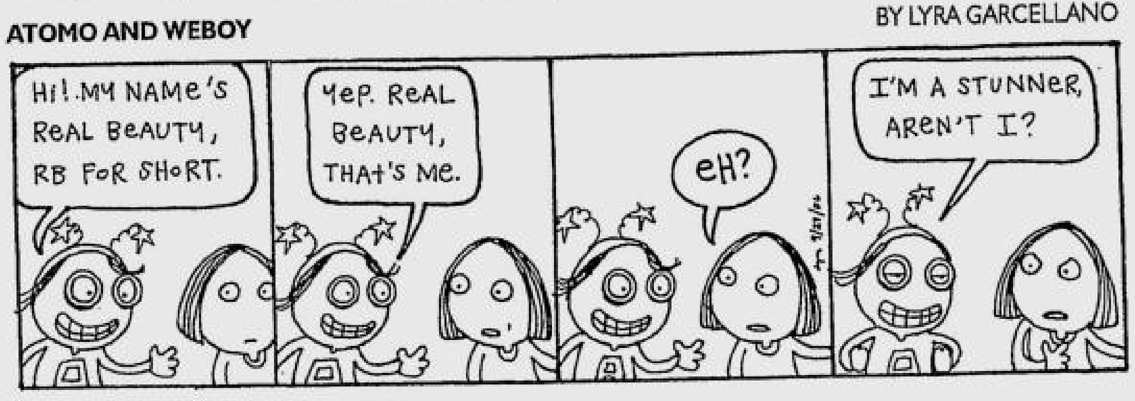
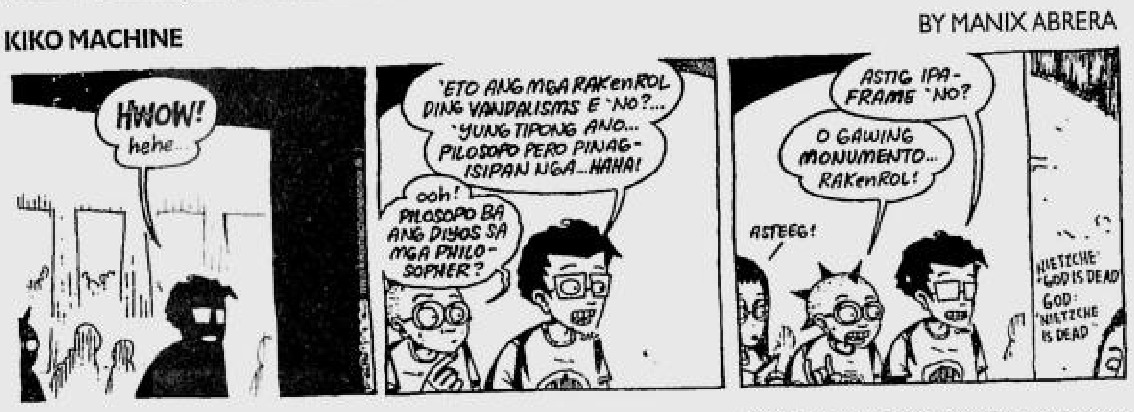
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HI! MY NAME'S REAL BEAUTY, RB FOR SHORT.
YEP. REAL BEAUTY, THAT'S ME.
EH?
I'M A STUNNER, AREN'T I?

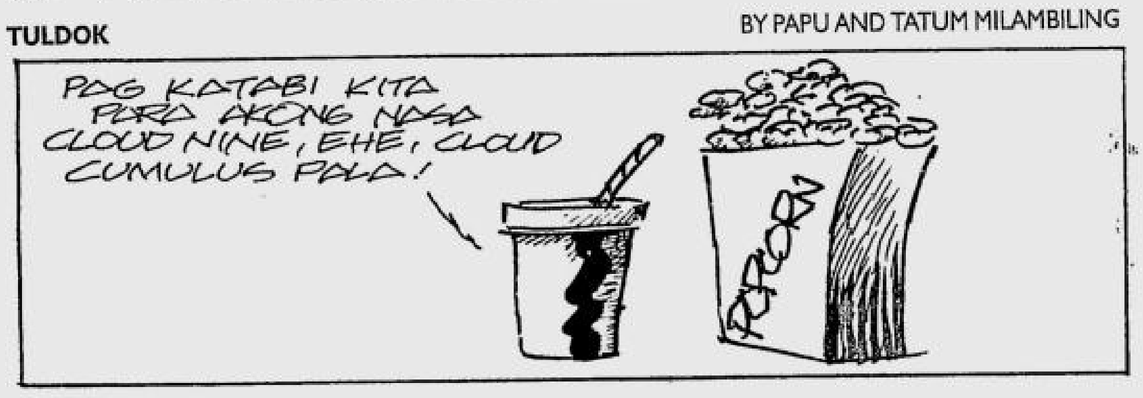
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HWOW! hehe...
'ETO ANG MGA RAKenROL DING VANDALISMS E 'NO?... 'YUNG TIPONG ANO... PILOSOPO PERO PINAG-ISIPAN NGA...HAHA!
ooh! PILOSOPO BA ANG DIYOS SA MGA PHILO-SOPHER?
ASTIG IPA-FRAME 'NO?
O GAWING MONUMENTO... RAKenROL!
ASTEEG!
NIETZCHE: "GOD IS DEAD" GOD: "NIETZCHE IS DEAD"

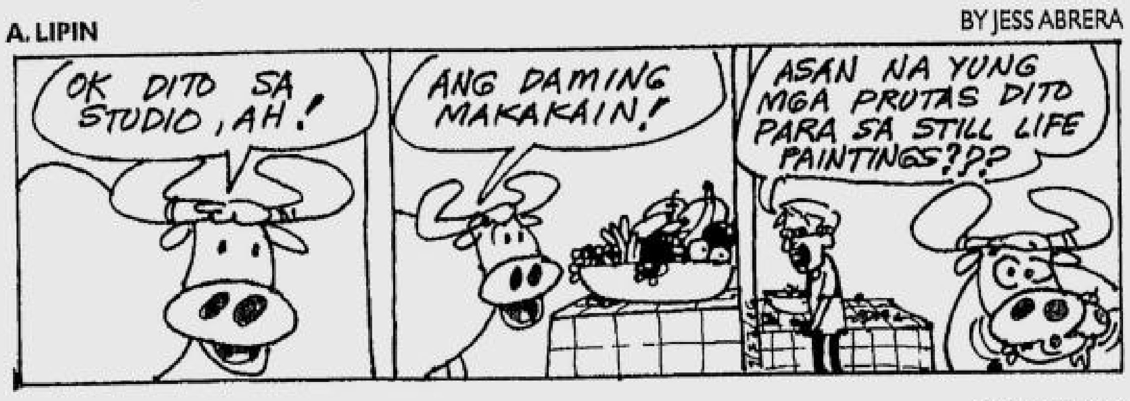
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


PAG KATABI KITA PARA AKONG NASA CLOUD NINE, EHE, CLOUD CUMULUS PALA!
POPCORN

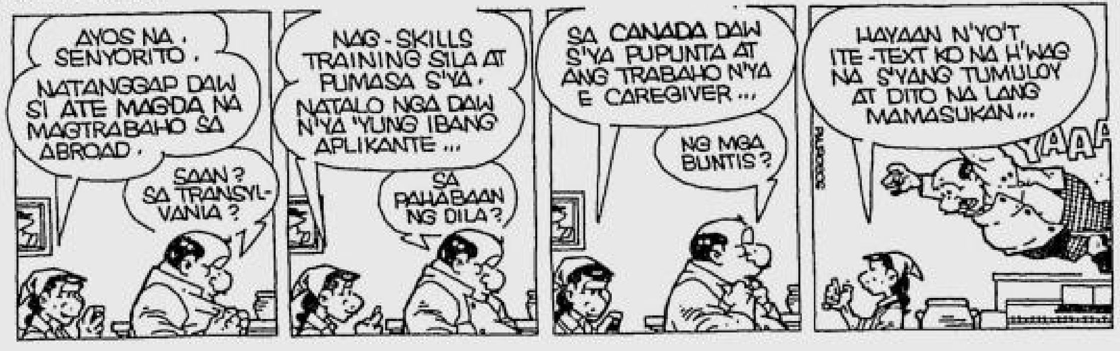
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


OK DITO SA STUDIO, AH!
ANG DAMING MAKAKAIN!
ASAN NA YUNG MGA PRUTAS DITO PARA SA STILL LIFE PAINTINGS???

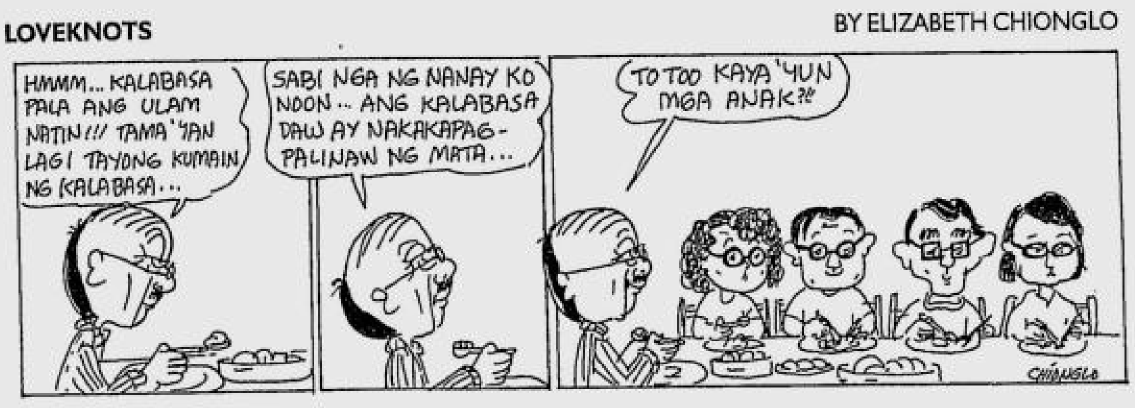
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


AYOS NA, SENYORITO.
NATANGGAP DAW SI ATE MAGDA NA MAGTRABAHO SA ABROAD.
SAAN? SA TRANSYL-VANIA?
NAG-SKILLS TRAINING SILA AT PUMASA S'YA. NATALO NGA DAW N'YA 'YUNG IBANG APLIKANTE...
SA PAHABAAN NG DILA?
SA CANADA DAW S'YA PUPUNTA AT ANG TRABAHO N'YA E CAREGIVER...
NG MGA BUNTIS?
HAYAAN N'YO'T ITE-TEXT KO NA H'WAG NA S'YANG TUMULOY AT DITO NA LANG MAMASUKAN...
YAAA

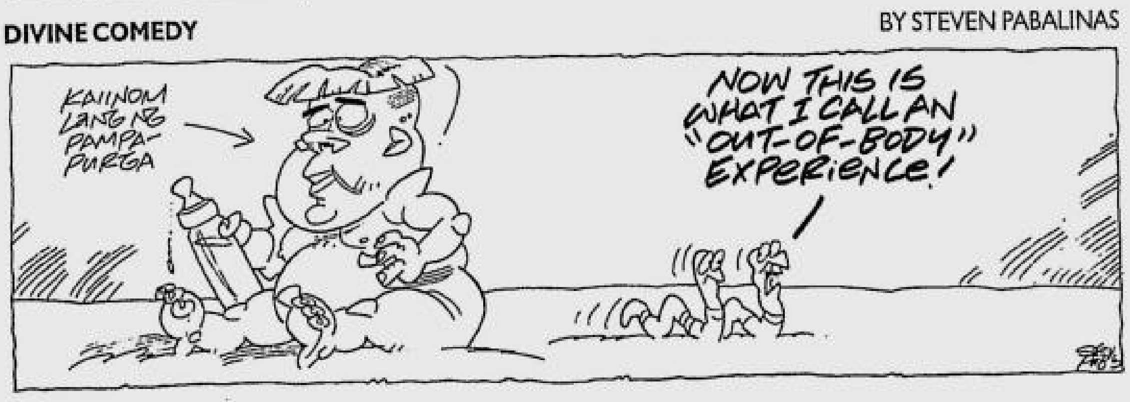
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


HMMM... KALABASA PALA ANG ULAM NATIN!!! TAMA 'YAN LAGI TAYONG KUMAIN NG KALABASA...
SABI NGA NG NANAY KO NOON... ANG KALABASA DAW AY NAKAKAPAG-PALINAW NG MATA...
TOTOO KAYA 'YUN MGA ANAK?!
CHIONGLO

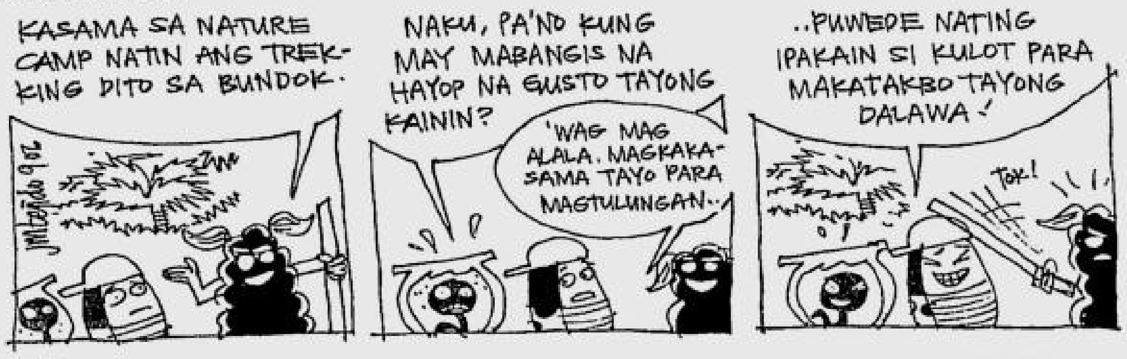
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


KAIINOM LANG NG PAMPA-PURGA
NOW THIS IS WHAT I CALL AN "OUT-OF-BODY" EXPERIENCE!

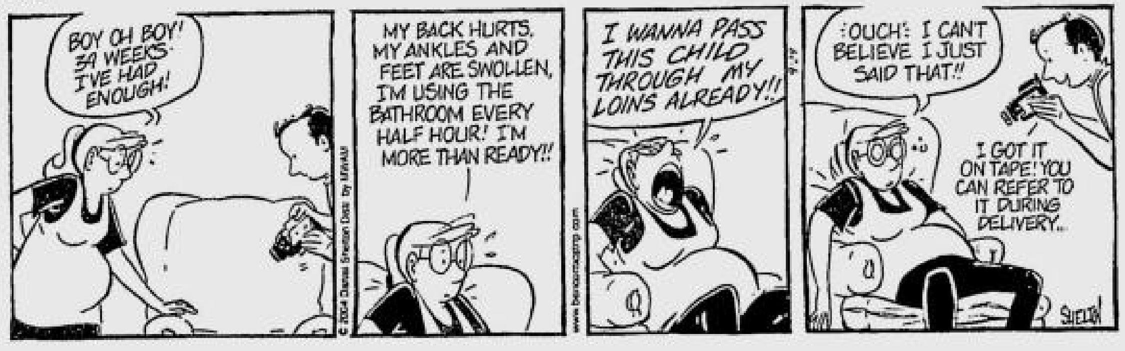
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

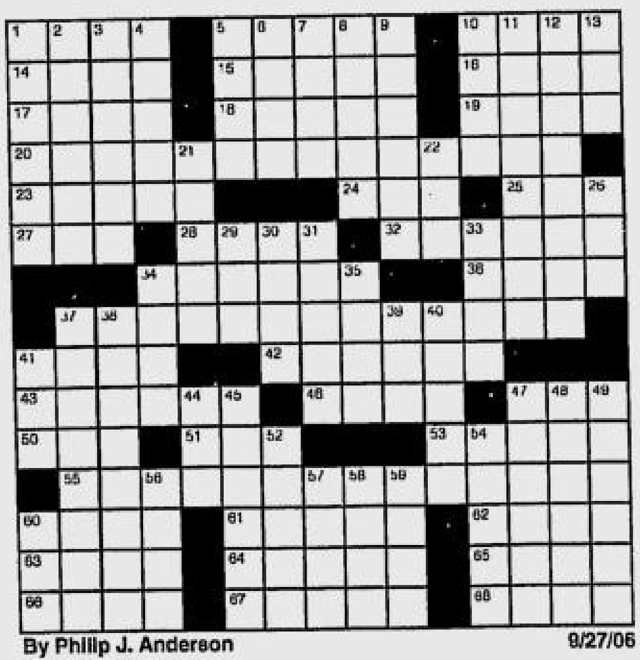

KASAMA SA NATURE CAMP NATIN ANG TREK-KING DITO SA BUNDOK.
NAKU, PA'NO KUNG MAY MABANGIS NA HAYOP NA GUSTO TAYONG KAININ?
'WAG MAG ALALA. MAGKAKA-SAMA TAYO PARA MAGTULUNGAN..
..PUWEDE NATING IPAKAIN SI KULOT PARA MAKATAKBO TAYONG DALAWA!
TOK!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


BOY OH BOY! 39 WEEKS. I'VE HAD ENOUGH!
MY BACK HURTS. MY ANKLES AND FEET ARE SWOLLEN, I'M USING THE BATHROOM EVERY HALF HOUR! I'M MORE THAN READY!!
I WANNA PASS THIS CHILD THROUGH MY LOINS ALREADY!!
OUCH! I CAN'T BELIEVE I JUST SAID THAT!!
I GOT IT ON TAPE! YOU CAN REFER TO IT DURING DELIVERY..
SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

9/27/06

ACROSS

1 Miss Lane's man
5 Mob enforcers
10 Challenge
14 SSS designation
15 Snooze alarm option
16 Inventor Sikorsky
17 Exploits
18 Ms. Verdugo
19 Lubricates
20 Redundant amount of land?
23 Ethical Culture founder
24 Gas: pref.
25 Big galoot
27 Observe
28 Nautical notes
32 California sea
34 Nabokov title
36 Morays
37 Redundant amount of chocolate?
41 Bugle call
42 Works out
43 Mountain ridges
46 QED word
47 __ Na Na
50 ATM maker
51 Anatomical pouch
53 __ Park, CO
55 Redundant number of jalopies?
60 Nov. honorees
61 Bilko, briefly
62 French religious title
63 Scraps for Fido
64 On-line transaction
65 Depilatory brand
66 Future atty.'s hurdle
67 Eyelid woes
68 Editorial order

DOWN

1 Eucalyptus residents
2 Put into cipher
3 Annoy
4 French cup
5 Not kosher
6 Beatles movie
7 Friendly lead-in
8 Type of salami
9 Stirrup bone
10 Designer Christian
11 Stirred up
12 Pleasingly plump?
13 Hosp. areas
21 Synthetic fiber
22 Notable years
26 USNA grad.
29 Aged
30 Nitty-gritty
31 Stockpile
33 Camera part
34 Excessive libido
35 Beyond sight
37 Demonstration participants
38 Light musical production
39 OSS, now
40 Paid to play
41 Summer shade
44 Pseudoscience
45 Mouths off
47 Pergolesi's oratorio, "__ Mater"
48 Jazz pianist Hancock
49 State with conviction
52 Freewheel
54 Peruses
56 ADC
57 Ravel
58 Feast the eyes upon
59 Ann and Ang
60 Ref. set member

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

H	I	N	T	■	R	E	A	P	S	■	S	I	T	E
U	H	U	H	■	E	G	R	E	T	■	O	D	O	R
L	O	K	I	■	F	O	R	E	I	G	N	E	R	S
A	P	E	R	C	U	■	A	N	N	O	T	A	T	E
■	■	■	T	O	T	S	Y	■	K	O	A	■	■	■
S	A	F	E	B	E	T	■	H	E	I	G	H	T	S
A	D	U	E	■	D	E	S	I	R	E	■	A	A	A
C	R	A	N	E	■	R	E	D	■	R	S	V	P	S
K	I	D	■	J	I	N	X	E	D	■	U	R	I	S
S	P	I	D	E	R	S	■	H	E	N	N	E	R	Y
■	■	■	A	C	R	■	C	O	P	A	L	■	■	■
S	O	L	I	T	U	D	E	■	O	P	I	A	T	E
O	P	E	N	S	P	A	C	E	S	■	G	R	I	M
B	A	I	T	■	T	R	I	N	E	■	H	E	L	M
S	L	A	Y	■	S	E	L	E	S	■	T	A	T	A

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9/27/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: Your outer exterior is cavalier, sophisticated and outgoing; privately, you can be quite different, even shy. You have high personal standards, and you work hard to achieve them. You're multitalented and sometimes have difficulty choosing a career. Nevertheless, many of you are very successful. The year ahead could be one of the best years of your life. Expect a miracle!

Birthdate of: Avril Lavigne, singer; A Martinez, actor; Shaun Cassidy, writer/former teen idol.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a good day for serious discussions with partners and close friends. Both parties are trying to get to the bottom of things. You want truth and clarification.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You can accomplish a lot at work today. You're willing to look for new solutions to old problems. Answers appear where you least expect them.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You're extremely resourceful today, especially in a creative way. You see new ways of doing things, and you also see fresh ways of using existing material. Work with what you've got!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Family conversations are serious but revealing today. Put out some energy to clean up areas near laundry, plumbing, bathroom and garbage areas. You want to get rid of junk!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You have a very penetrating mind today. You're able to see the subtext of things. (You see beneath the surface of something.) Nobody can fool you today!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You might see new uses for existing possessions that you now have. Similarly, you might see new ways of making money within an existing system. Keep your eyes peeled.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're extremely convincing today. You have your facts, and you see new ways of applying them. Because of this, others are impressed with what you have to say.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is a fabulous day for research of any kind. You will dig deep, looking for answers. Nothing is too much trouble, because you want the truth.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Conversations with friends are powerful but revealing. Secrets could come out today. Alternatively, someone might show you how to do something in a new and better way.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You could be blown away by discussions with bosses, parents and VIPs today. People mean business! Unless you know what you're talking about, take a back seat.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is an excellent day for study and research of any kind. In particular, philosophy, religion and politics intrigue you now.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Research into insurance matters, debt, taxes and anything having to do with inheritances and estates can be productive today. You might also learn a lot of information about somebody else's wealth or income.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

4			9			2		
	9			6			5	
		2			7			9
9			7			8		
	4			1			6	
		6			2			5
5			1			4		
	3			2			8	
		7			4			2

Difficulty Level ★★★

9/27

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

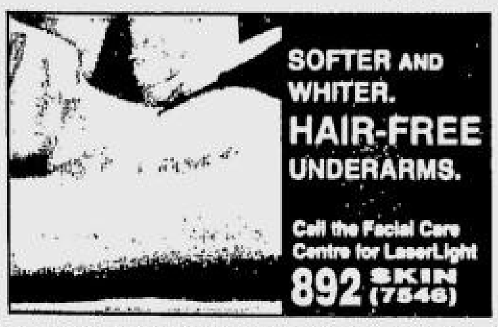
4	5	2	9	8	3	6	1	7
6	8	9	4	7	1	2	3	5
7	3	1	6	5	2	8	9	4
2	1	8	7	3	6	4	5	9
5	7	6	2	4	9	3	8	1
9	4	3	5	1	8	7	2	6
8	2	5	1	6	4	9	7	3
3	6	7	8	9	5	1	4	2
1	9	4	3	2	7	5	6	8

Difficulty Level ★★

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) **or email us at** pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph



SOFTER AND WHITER. HAIR-FREE UNDERARMS.
Call the Facial Care Centre for LaserLight 892 SKIN (7546)

When KC met Gabby (again)

PHOTO COURTESY OF PH CARE

Or how she spent her summer vacation—reminiscing, eating out and hitting the beach with Papa in sunny California

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

"I THOUGHT, 'HE'S EXACTLY the way I pictured him to be.' I'd known him all along *pala*."

This was KC Concepcion's description of the moment she saw her father, actor Gabby Concepcion—now based in the United States—for the first time in 10 years.

KC shared her thoughts with INQUIRER Entertainment in an e-mail from Paris, where she is now in junior college.

As for Gabby ...

"He must have been just as thrilled," she wrote. "His smile reached his eyes ... that meant it was

WHEN/ E4

IT WAS the right time for a reunion, she says. They were both "thrilled."

PHOTO COURTESY OF KC CONCEPCION

SHANG CINEPLEX
① ZOOM
MTRCB GP
1 05, 3.15, 5.30, 7:45, 10:00
② FLYBOYS
(Subject for MTRCB Rating)
③ FIRST DAY HIGH
(Subject for MTRCB Rating)
④ STEP-UP
MTRCB PG-13
12 00, 2:30, 5.00, 7:30, 10:00
PREMIERE THEATRE JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
MTRCB PG-13
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MONDAY AND TUESDAY SPECIALS
On Mondays and Tuesdays, starting August 14, enjoy special prices of P99.00 for Cinemas 1-4,P120 for the Premiere Theatre (exclusive of food and drinks).
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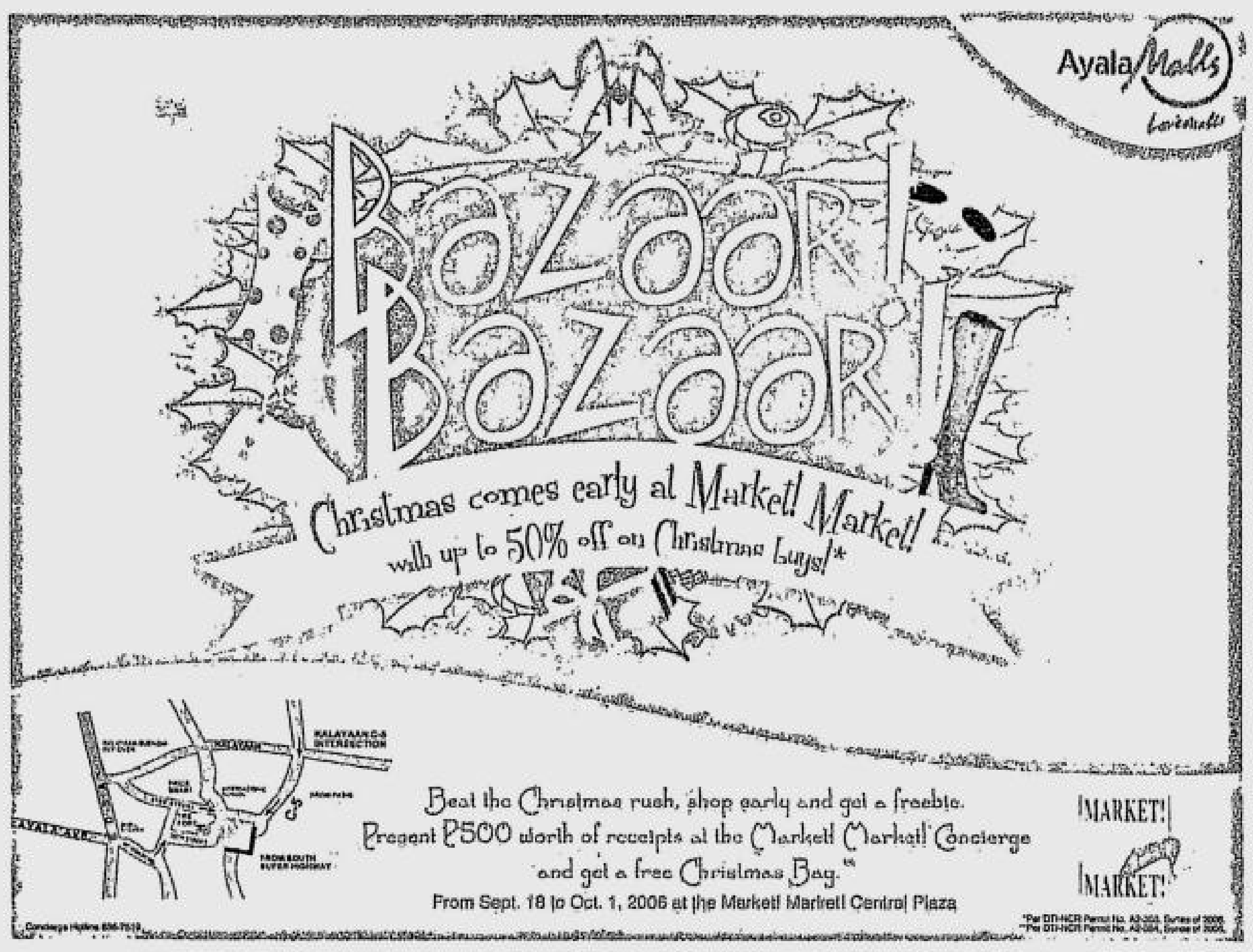
Shangri-La Plaza



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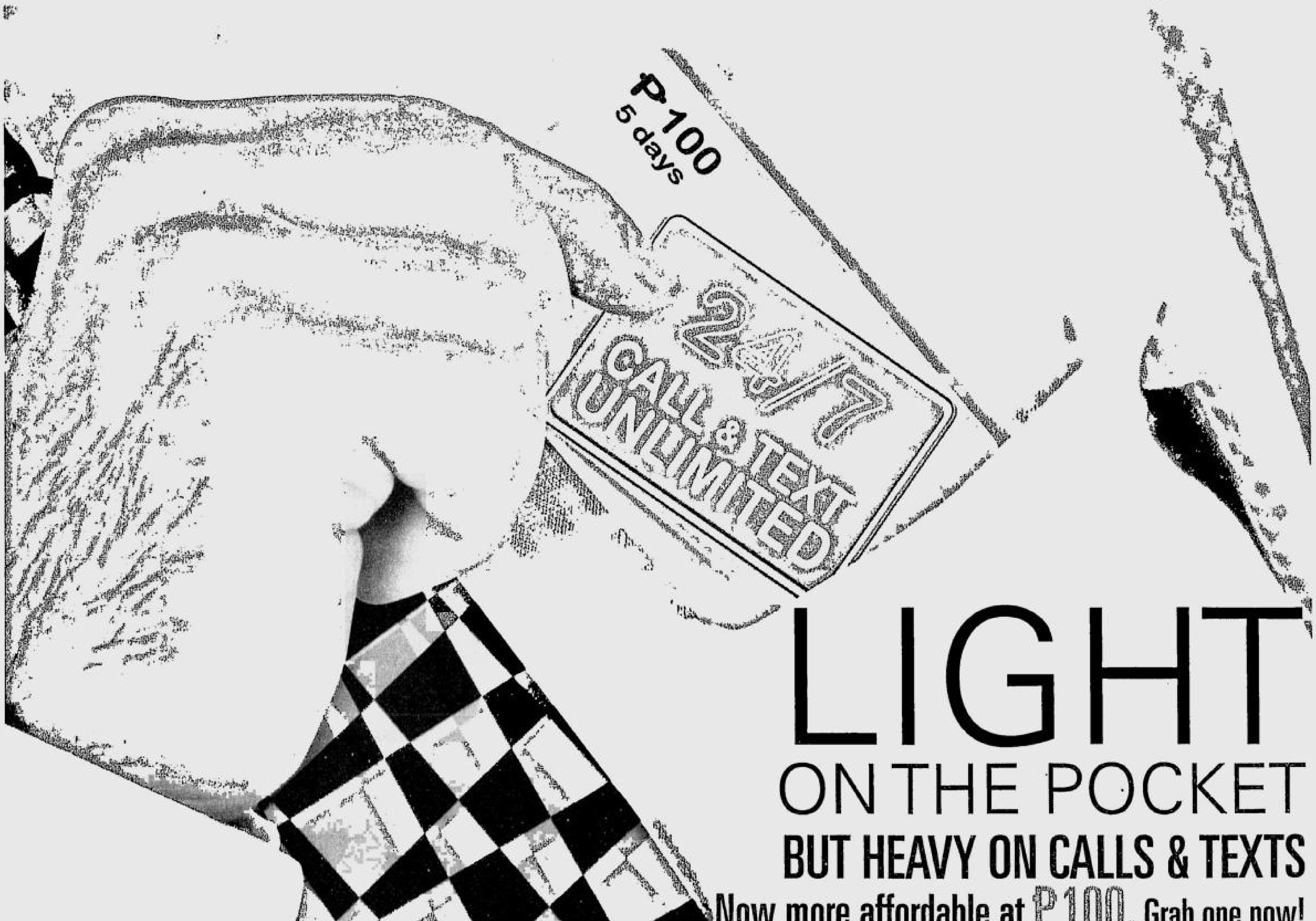
Bazaar! Bazaar!
Christmas comes early at Market! Market!
with up to 50% off on Christmas buys!*
Beat the Christmas rush, shop early and get a freebie.
Present ₱500 worth of receipts at the Market! Market! Concierge and get a free Christmas Bag.**
From Sept. 18 to Oct. 1, 2006 at the Market! Market! Central Plaza
MARKET! MARKET!



LIGHT
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The Mall>Mall Assistant>My Account>Prepaid>Buy 24x7>CTU 5

Also available:
₱150 7 days with ₱25 Regular Load
₱450 30 days with ₱50 Regular Load
sun CELLULAR PREPAID

OPENING TODAY

First Day High

Stars Geoff Eigenmann, Maja Salvador, Cherry Pie Picache, Michael de Mesa, Gardo Versoza, Bembol Roco, Kim Chiu, Gerald Anderson

Directed by Mario Cornejo

Inspired by a deodorant commercial and Kamikazee's rock anthem of the same title, this youth flick features five disparate teens—a princess (Salvador), nerd (Chiu), jock (Anderson), rebel (Eigenmann) and nice guy (Abalos)—rounded up as "unusual" suspects in a campus crime. "They're hard-working," director Cornejo says of his youthful cast. "They delivered beyond my expectations and they'll surely go places." Cornejo's debut, the award-winning indie film "Big Time," featured De Mesa in a stellar role. His first mainstream flick not only boasts De Mesa, but also De Mesa's son Eigenmann. "It was weird at first," Eigenmann says of working with dad. "In real life, we're very open to each other. But in this movie we're supposed to be at odds. But it turned out well because I was working with *the* Michael de Mesa."

Ingrata

Stars Nora Aunor, Bernardo Bernardo, John Robert Porter Jr., Germaine de Leon, Andrea Santos

Directed by Joey Gonzales

Aunor joins the digital bandwagon in this movie shot entirely in the United States, where she is now based. The "comeback" movie recounts the travails of a Filipina (Aunor) who married an American (Porter, previously known as rapper John Rendez), to legitimize her stay in America—actually, the ghettos of Los Angeles. She falls for the man she thought she could never love. Produced by Diversified Entertainment and Media Organization (Demo), the movie is directed by Gonzales from a script by Bernardo, who also plays Aunor's brother. Exclusively showing at SM Digital Cinemas for the benefit of ABS-CBN's Bantay Bata.

Zoom

Stars Tim Allen, Courteney Cox, Chevy Chase, Rip Torn

Directed by Peter Hewitt

Confronted by certain doom, the planet turns to jaded superhero Captain Zoom (Allen) to defeat creepy villain Concussion. Reluctantly, Zoom trains a rag-tag band of kids who possess superhuman powers. Ty Burr of Boston Globe describes it as "made up of leftover parts of 'The Incredibles,' 'Sky High' and 'X-Men'... pure Saturday matinee kiddie fodder." But Kirk Honeycutt of The Hollywood Reporter thinks, "The young actors acquit themselves well, and the veterans do their best."

Flyboys

Stars James Franco, Martin Henderson, Jean Reno, Tyler Labine

Directed by Tony Bill

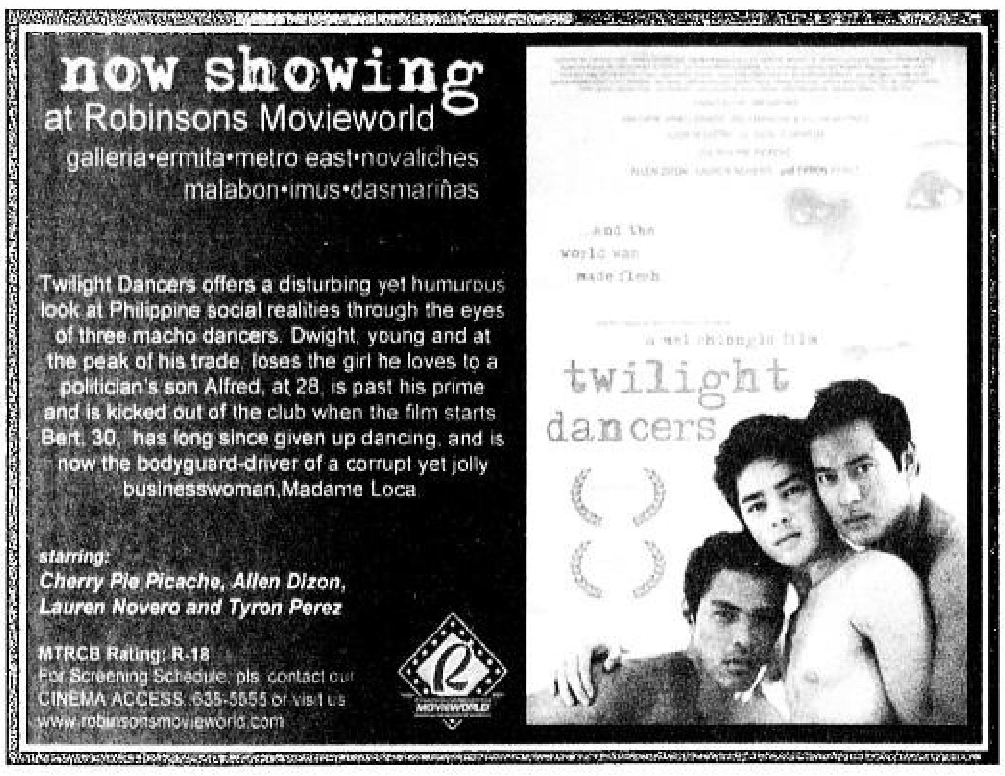
This action-adventure boasts of being the "first World War I aviation film in over 40 years." Based on a true story, it celebrates the heroism of plucky young Americans who volunteer to play an integral role in the Allied resistance. Bill Gallo of The Village Voice calls it a "romantic, computer-generated fantasy." Stephen Hunter of Washington Post finds the "aerial stuff occasionally stirring." Josh Bell of Las Vegas Weekly felt it was "mildly insulting."

Possessed by Evil

Stars Elizabeth Arlen, Jeff Kober, Mykelti Williamson, Lou Diamond Phillips

Directed by Robert Resnikoff

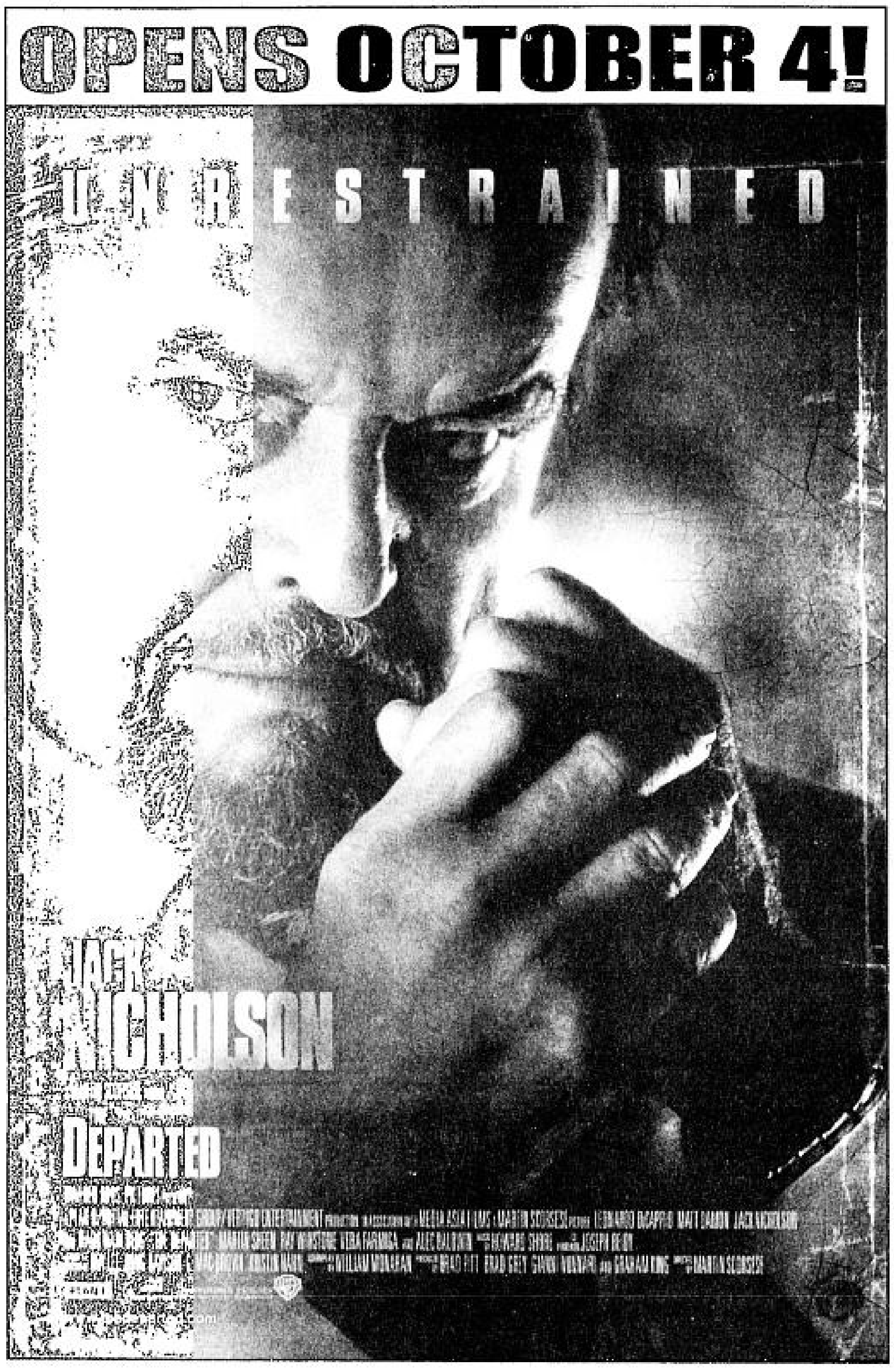
The Pentagram serial killer is executed, but his spirit is unleashed and is empowered by the devil to take possession of innocent people. A detective teams up with a psychic and a nun to stop the "body-hopping" murderer. Richard Harrington of Washington Post states that the film "tries awfully hard to combine two popular film genres—the police thriller and the occult assault—and comes up short on both ends." Vincent Canby of New York Times concurs: "Lackluster attempt at blending equal parts action movie and supernatural thriller." The Catholic Initiative for Enlightened Movie Appreciation is kinder: "Not spectacular but is worth watching."

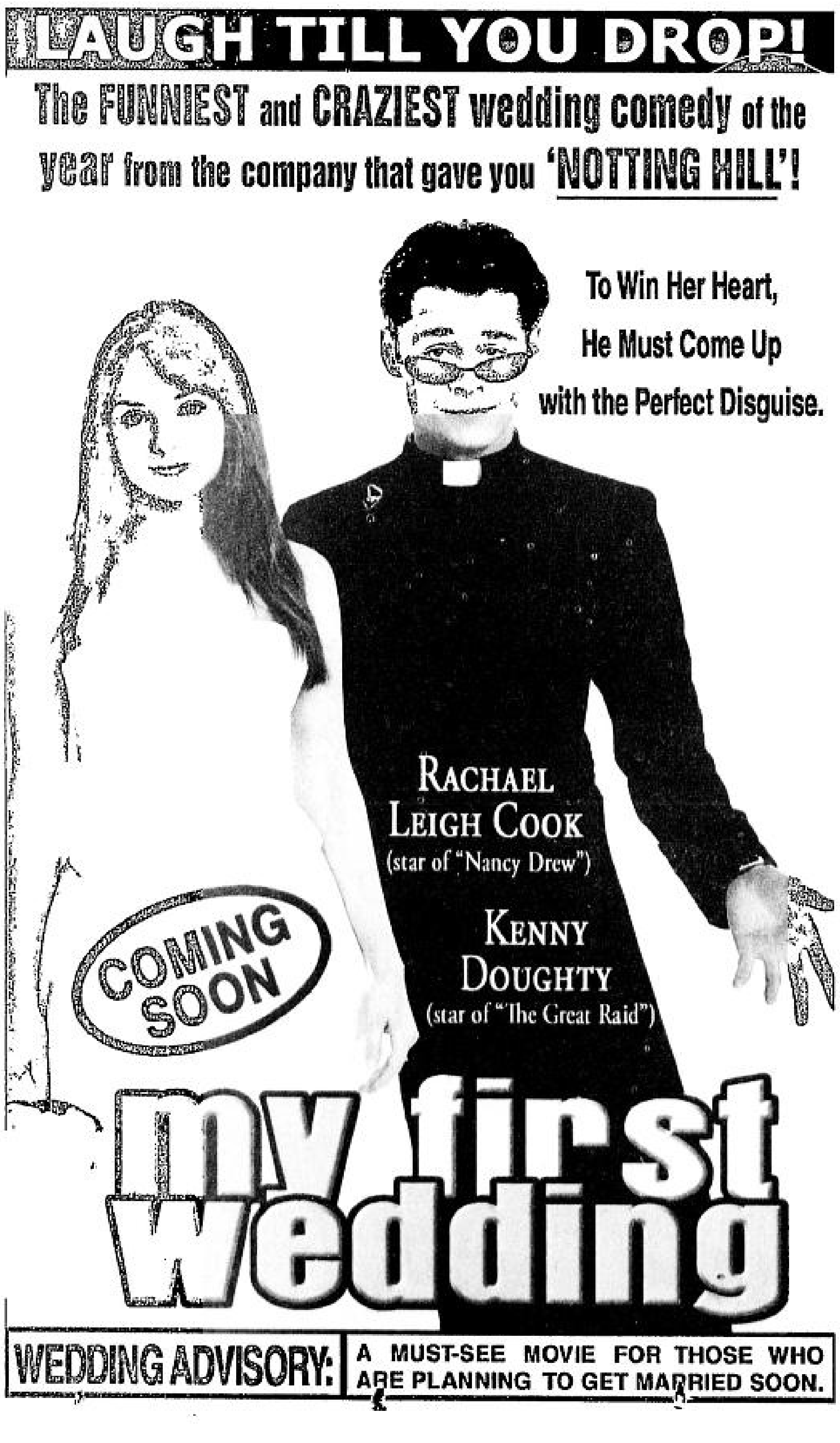

now showing
at Robinsons Movieworld
galleria•ermita•metro east•novaliches
malabon•imus•dasmariñas

Twilight Dancers offers a disturbing yet humurous look at Philippine social realities through the eyes of three macho dancers. Dwight, young and at the peak of his trade, loses the girl he loves to a politician's son Alfred, at 28, is past his prime and is kicked out of the club when the film starts Bert, 30, has long since given up dancing, and is now the bodyguard-driver of a corrupt yet jolly businesswoman,Madame Loca

starring:
Cherry Pie Picache, Allen Dizon, Lauren Novero and Tyron Perez

MTRCB Rating: R-18
For Screening Schedule, pls. contact our CINEMA ACCESS. 635-5555 or visit us www.robinsonsmovieworld.com


OPENS OCTOBER 4!


LAUGH TILL YOU DROP!
The FUNNIEST and CRAZIEST wedding comedy of the year from the company that gave you 'NOTTING HILL'!

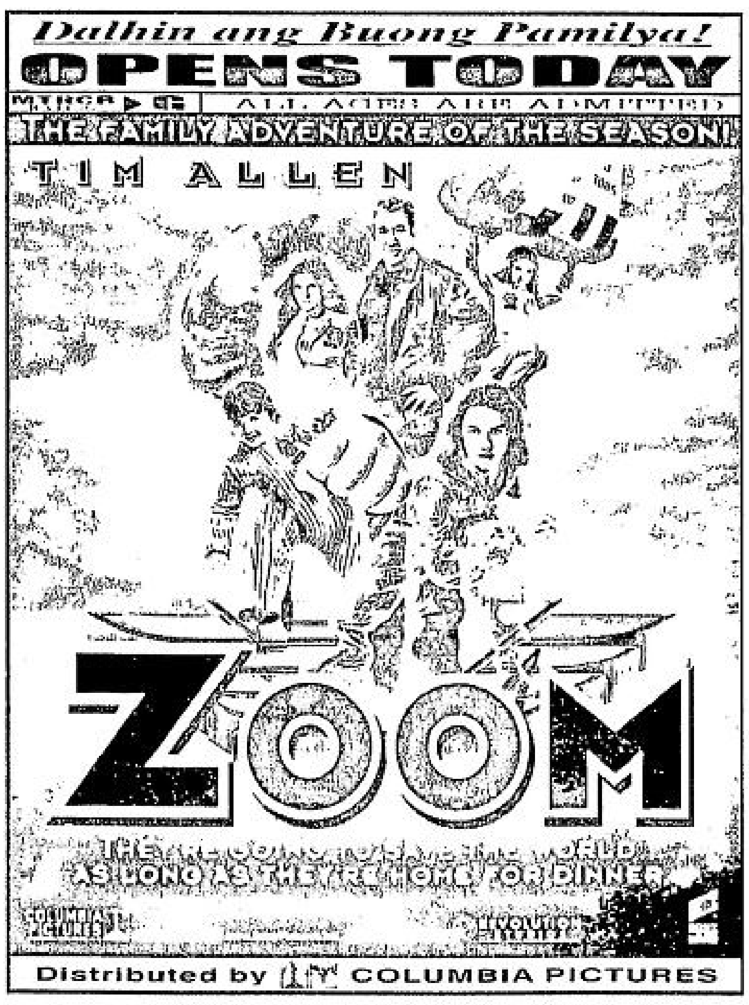
To Win Her Heart, He Must Come Up with the Perfect Disguise.

RACHAEL LEIGH COOK (star of "Nancy Drew")
KENNY DOUGHTY (star of "The Great Raid")

COMING SOON

my first wedding

WEDDING ADVISORY: A MUST-SEE MOVIE FOR THOSE WHO ARE PLANNING TO GET MARRIED SOON.


Dalhin ang Buong Pamilya!
OPENS TODAY
MTRCB ▶ G ALL AGES ARE ADMITTED
THE FAMILY ADVENTURE OF THE SEASON!
Distributed by COLUMBIA PICTURES

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FLESH-RIPPING.
BONE-CRUSHING.
RECORD-BREAKING.
MAN'S BEST FRIEND IS HIS WORST NIGHTMARE.
A WES CRAVEN PRODUCTION
THE BREED
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THE BOOR AND THE PROPOSAL

DIRECTED BY
BART GUINGONA

SEPTEMBER 16-OCTOBER 8, 2006

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Gateway CINEPLEX*10
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX

FLYBOYS 12:50 / 3:50 / 6:50 / 9:50	FIRST DAY HIGH	ZOOM 1:15 / 3:20 / 5:25 / 7:30 / 9:35	Globe PLATINUM CINEMA
THE BREED 3:20 / 7:40	DEAD OR ALIVE 12:45 / 3:00 / 5:15 / 7:30 / 9:45	KAMA SUTRA 3	
TWILIGHT DANCERS 12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40	STEP UP 1:45 / 4:20 / 6:55 / 9:30	THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA 1:00 / 5:20 / 9:40	FLYBOYS 12:15 / 3:15 / 6:15 / 9:15

Ali MALL 5

1 ZOOM 12:10 / 2:15 / 4:20 / 6:25 / 8:30	2 FLY BOYS 12:05 R3 / 2:25 / 5:25 / 8:25	3 DEAD OR ALIVE 12:00 R3 / 1:35 / 3:50 / 6:05 / 8:20
4 POSSESSED BY EVIL	5 FIRST DAY HIGH	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

For more information, call 911-5555 or log on to ticketnet.com.ph & aranetacenter.net

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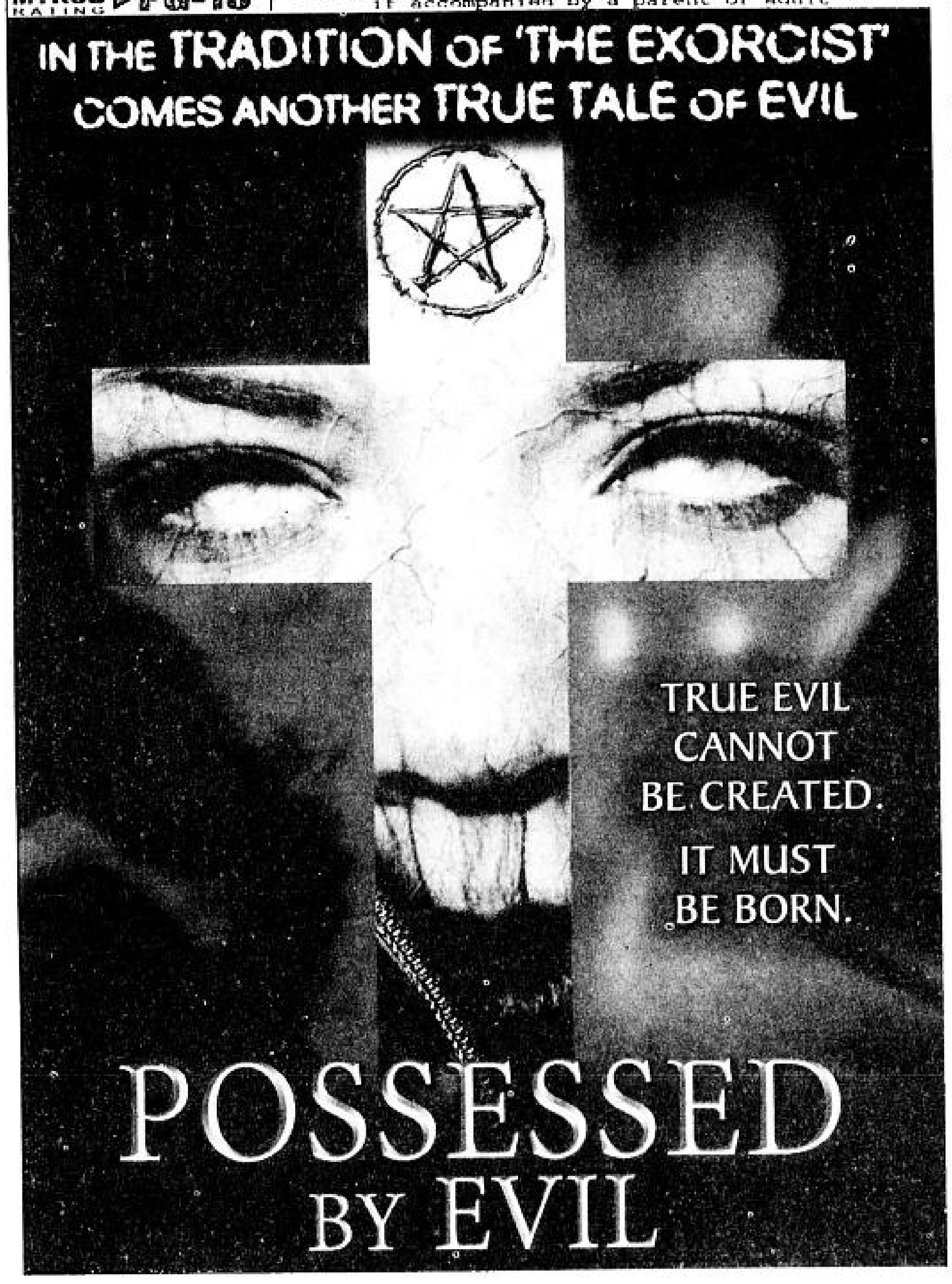
See Posters for more details

Per DTI-NCR permit no. A1-727, series of 2006

THE DEVIL IS COMING TODAY

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult


IN THE TRADITION OF 'THE EXORCIST'
COMES ANOTHER TRUE TALE OF EVIL
TRUE EVIL CANNOT BE CREATED.
IT MUST BE BORN.
POSSESSED BY EVIL

MTRCB RATING PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

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DOA
DEAD OR ALIVE
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There are some frequencies we were never meant to find.
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GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1 STEP UP
1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00
PG-13

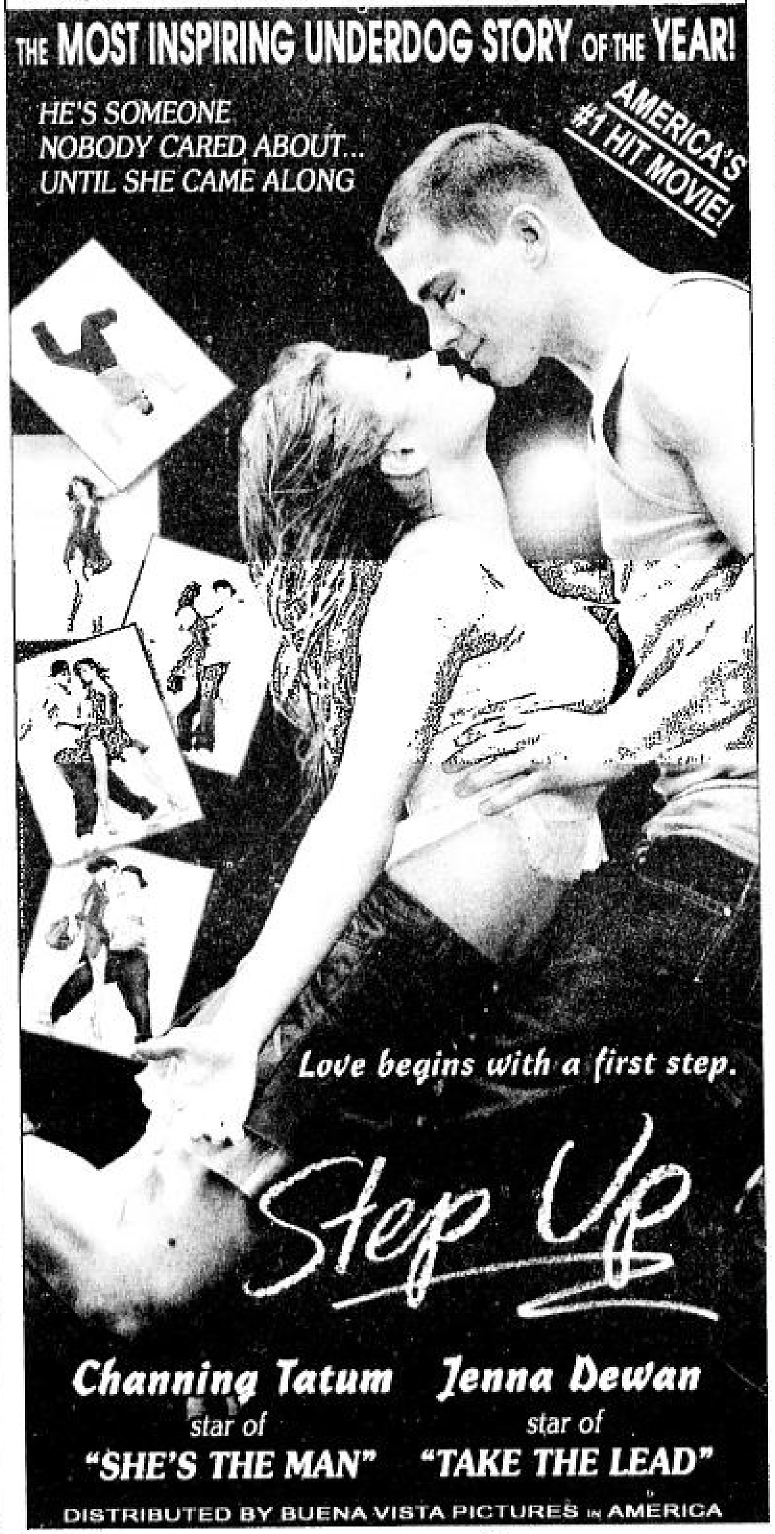
2 FLYBOYS

3 ZOOM
2:00, 4:10, 6:25, 8:40, 11:00
G

4 FIRST DAY HIGH

MTRCB RATING PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

NOW SHOWING
MANILA's MOST TALKED-ABOUT ROMANTIC-DANCE MOVIE


THE MOST INSPIRING UNDERDOG STORY OF THE YEAR!
HE'S SOMEONE NOBODY CARED ABOUT... UNTIL SHE CAME ALONG
AMERICA'S #1 HIT MOVIE!
Love begins with a first step.
Step Up
Channing Tatum star of "SHE'S THE MAN"
Jenna Dewan star of "TAKE THE LEAD"
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METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

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NOW SHOWING

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[illegible] Shangrila Plaza EDSA corner [illegible] Boulevard, Mandaluyong City
1 (DOLBY) ZOOM
2 (DOLBY) FLY BOYS
3 (DOLBY) FIRST DAY HIGH
4 (DOLBY) STEP UP
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, China Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 836.4216
1 ZOOM
2 FLY BOYS
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 DEAD OR ALIVE

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) ZOOM
5 FLY BOYS

metropolis star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8604205, 5433994
1 TWILIGHT DANCERS
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 FLY BOYS
4 ZOOM

THEATRES
1 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 CRANK

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 SNAKE ON A PLANE
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 STEP UP
2 DEAD OR ALIVE
3 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
4 FIRST DAY HIGH
5 POSSESSED BY EVIL
6 ZOOM
7 FLY BOYS
8 THE BREED
9 YOU ARE THE ONE
10 FIRST DAY HIGH

Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sta. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) FIRST DAY HIGH
2 (DOLBY) ZOOM
3 (DOLBY)
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 (DOLBY) FLY BOYS
2 DEAD OR ALIVE
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 TWILIGHT DANCERS
5 ZOOM

THE MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3056
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 CRANK
3 THE BREED
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 ZOOM
3 DEAD OR ALIVE

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 ZOOM
2 SNAKE ON A PLANE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
3 ZOOM
4 THE WICKER MAN

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 MIAMI VICE
2 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) STEP UP
2 (DOLBY) FLY BOYS
3 (DOLBY) ZOOM
4 (DOLBY) FIRST DAY HIGH

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 ZOOM
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
2 ZOOM
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 TWILIGHT DANCERS

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 CRANK

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
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4 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA

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2 FLY BOYS
3 DEAD OR ALIVE
4 ZOOM
5 THE BREED
6 INGRATA
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STEP UP
CINEMA 1
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CINEMA 2
ZOOM
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2 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
3 FLY BOYS
4 FIRST DAY HIGH
5 POSSESSED BY EVIL
6 STEP UP
7 DEADOR ALIVE
8 FIRST DAY HIGH
9 INGRATA
10 YOU ARE THE ONE
11 THE BREED
12 ZOOM

SM MEGAMALL 633-1901
1 DEAD OR ALIVE
2 FLY BOYS
3 PHILIPPINE IDOL
4 JOSEPH THE DREAMER
5 POSSESSED BY EVIL
6 ZOOM
7 INGRATA
8 THE BREED
9 STEP UP
10 FIRST DAY HIGH
11 YOU ARE THE ONE
12 WICKER MAN

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 INGRATA
2 THE BREED
3 CRANK
4 FLY BOYS
5 STEP UP
6 FIRST DAY HIGH
7 DEAD OR ALIVE
8 ZOOM
9 YOU ARE THE ONE
10 POSSESSED BY EVIL
11 ETERNITY
12 MONSTER HOUSE

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 DEAD OR ALIVE
2 ZOOM
3 FLY BOYS
4 STEP UP
5 FIRST DAY HIGH
6 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
7 THE BREED
8 INGRATA
9 YOU ARE THE ONE
10 CRANK

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 DEAD OR ALIVE
2 ZOOM
3 STEP UP
4 THE BREED
5 FLY BOYS
6 FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY SOUTHMALL 8[illegible]-6888
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 DEAD OR ALIVE
3 POSSESSED BY EVIL
4 ZOOM
5 STEP UPE
6 YOU ARE THE ONE
7 THE BREED
8 FLY BOYS
9 INGRATA

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 ZOOM
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 FLY BOYS
4 DEAD OR ALIVE

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 INGRATA
2 POSSESSED BY EVIL
3 STEP UP
4 DEAD OR ALIVE
5 ZOOM
6 FLY BOYS
7 FIRST DAY HIGH
8 CRANK
9 YOU ARE THE ONE
10 THE BREED
11 SNAKES ON A PLANE
12 WICKER MAN

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4333301-04
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 SCOOP
3 YOU,ME AND DUPREE
4 ZOOM

SM VALENZUELA 293-3017
1 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
2 ZOOM
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 THE BREED

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2 THEN BREED
3 DEAD OR ALIVE
4 ZOOM
5 FLY BOYS
6 FIRST DAY HIGH
7 YOU ARE THE ONE
8 SNAKES ON A PLANE

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 ZOOM
2 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
3 WICKER MAN
4 SCOOP
5 FIRST DAY HIGH
6 SNAKES ON A PLANE

SM CITY MARILAO (044)0332013-17
1 ZOOM
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 SNAKES ON A PLANE
4 CRANK

LUZON

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
4 YOU,ME AND DUPREE

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637001-85
1 WICKER MAN
2 ZOOM
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
5 INGRATA
6 FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY LIPA
1 YOU,ME AND DUPREE
2 SNAKES ON A PLANE
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 DEVIL WEARS PRADA

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
2 SNAKES ON A PLANE
3 CRANK
4 FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 ZOOM
2 SNAKES ON A PLANE
3 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
4 FIRST DAY HIGH

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 STEP UP
3 FLY BOYS
4 DEAD OR ALIVE

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341265-66
1 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
2 SNAKES ON A PLANE
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 ZOOM

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
2 DEAD OR ALIVE
3 THE BREED
4 ZOOM
5 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
6 INGRATA
FIRST DAY HIGH
8 WICKER MAN

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 WICKER MAN
2 RESERVED
3 CRANK
4 FIRST DAY HIGH
5 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
6 ZOOM
7 RESERVED
8 SCOOP

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
2 INGRATA
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 SNAKES ON A PLANE
5 WICKER MAN
6 ZOOM

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 ZOOM
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 WICKER MAN
4 CRANK

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2 ZOOM
3 POSSESSED BY EVIL
4 FLY BOYS
5 FIRST DAY HIGH
6 TWILIGHT DANCERS
7 DEAD OR ALIVE
8 THE BREED
9 STEP UP
10 CRANK

ERMITA 536-7809 to 1[illegible]
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 TWILIGHT DANCERS
3 ZOOM
4 DEAD OR ALIVE
5 FLY BOYS
6 POSSESSED BY EVIL
7 STEP UP
THE BREED

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199
1 POSSESSED BY EVIL
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 ZOOM
4 FLY BOYS
5 DEAD OR ALIVE
6 STEP UP
7 BREED
8 TWILIGHT DANCERS
BREED

NOVALICHES 935-3231/ 935-3228-30
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 ZOOM
3 FLY BOYS
4 TWILIGHT DANCERS

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2 TWILIGHT DANCERS
3 RESERVE
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4 YOU, ME AND DUPREE

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2 ZOOM
3 TWILIGHT DANCERS
4 SCOOP

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2 THE WICKER MAN
3 ZOOM
4 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE

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4 CRANK
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When KC met Gabby

From page E1

for real, right?"

In spite of the inordinate media attention, KC enjoyed her 10-day visit. As she put it, "one day for each year missed."

The way she related it, the trip sounded like the usual "summer vacation."

Last year, KC spent the summer acting onstage (as Belle in "Beauty and the Beast"). This year she spent it reminiscing—"appeasing some confusion" and answering some questions.

What are the highlights of your US trip?

We ate out [a lot]—Vietnamese and Japanese food. Also at Cheesecake Factory, one of my favorite restaurants in the US. We went around San Francisco.

We hit the beach. We couldn't *not* do that. My childhood memories of him are mostly being with him in Anilao, Batangas. Everything I know about the ocean, I learned from him.

Also, I met all my cousins and saw all my aunts and uncles (father's side) again. That was the biggest highlight for me.

What's his wife (Genevieve) like?

They don't have kids yet, but his wife's really nice. She never made me feel like an outsider. I was initially apprehensive, but she was the first to joke that it's okay if I decide to stay with them forever! At night, I'd call my Mama (Sharon Cuneta) and she (Genevieve) didn't mind even if I used up her phone cards! We cooked together. I'd text my Mama to ask about recipes and the best marinade for tuna.

Tell us about the "unopened letters" mentioned in your blog?

That was when my Papa didn't know how to reach me. He wrote birthday cards and sent them all to himself for three years. Maybe he was hoping it wouldn't be long until we saw each other again. I cried about that, of course.

What was it like saying goodbye to your Papa after the visit?

It felt good because we both knew it wasn't a "forever" goodbye. It was just a "for now" goodbye.

Where do you two go from here?

Of course it's no longer like before. The visit was a turning point for us. I promised my *titos* and *titas* that I'd keep in touch. My Papa and his wife hold a very special place in my heart. Even my Mama feels that things can only go uphill from here. She's happy and she knows I'll never leave her for anyone!

How was your mom and stepdad (Francis Pangilinan) through all this?

Since I believe things happened at the right time, my Dad and Mama were very supportive and understanding.

What did you discover about yourself after this trip?

WHEN/ E6

ROUNDUP

'Jackass' debuts with $28.1M

LOS ANGELES—JOHNNY Knoxville and his pals pulled another prank on Hollywood as their sequel of crazy stunts, "Jackass Number Two," beat a rush of serious movies to take the top spot at the weekend box office.

Paramount's "Jackass Number Two" debuted with $28.1 million, with Focus Features' "Jet Li's Fearless," featuring the martial-arts master in a saga set in China a century ago, opening in second place with $10.6 million, according to studio estimates Sunday.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at US and Canadian theaters, according to Exhibitor Relations, official trackers: 1) "Jackass Number Two," $28.1M; 2) "Jet Li's Fearless," $10.6M; 3) "Gridiron Gang," $9.7M; 4) "Flyboys," $6M; 5) "Everyone's Hero," $4.75M; 6) "The Black Dahlia," $4.4M; 7) "All the King's Men," $3.8M; 8) "The Covenant," $3.3M; 9) "The Illusionist," $3.28M; 10) "Little Miss Sunshine," $2.9M. *AP*

Chefs on 'GamePlan'

Budding chefs compete frantically as they run, jump, balance, stretch, climb, and rappel down towers to showcase their culinary expertise in the California Grapescapade Culinary Treasure Hunt on "GamePlan."

In Misfit, Ramon Bautista gives the viewers a peak at never-before-seen footage of outtakes and bloopers from Paolo and Wowie.

This episode of "GamePlan" airs on Oct. 1, 1:30 p.m. on Studio 23.

'Departed' premiere

The Martin Scorsese crime epic action-thriller "The Departed" will have an invitational gala premiere on Sept. 30 at Greenbelt 3.

Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Matt Damon, Jack Nicholson, Mark Wahlberg, Martin Sheen and Alec Baldwin, the film is set in South Boston where the police department is waging an all-out war to take down the city's top organized crime ring.

The key is to end the reign of powerful mob boss Frank Costello (Nicholson) from the inside. A young rookie, Billy Costigan (DiCaprio) is assigned to infiltrate the mob run by Costello.

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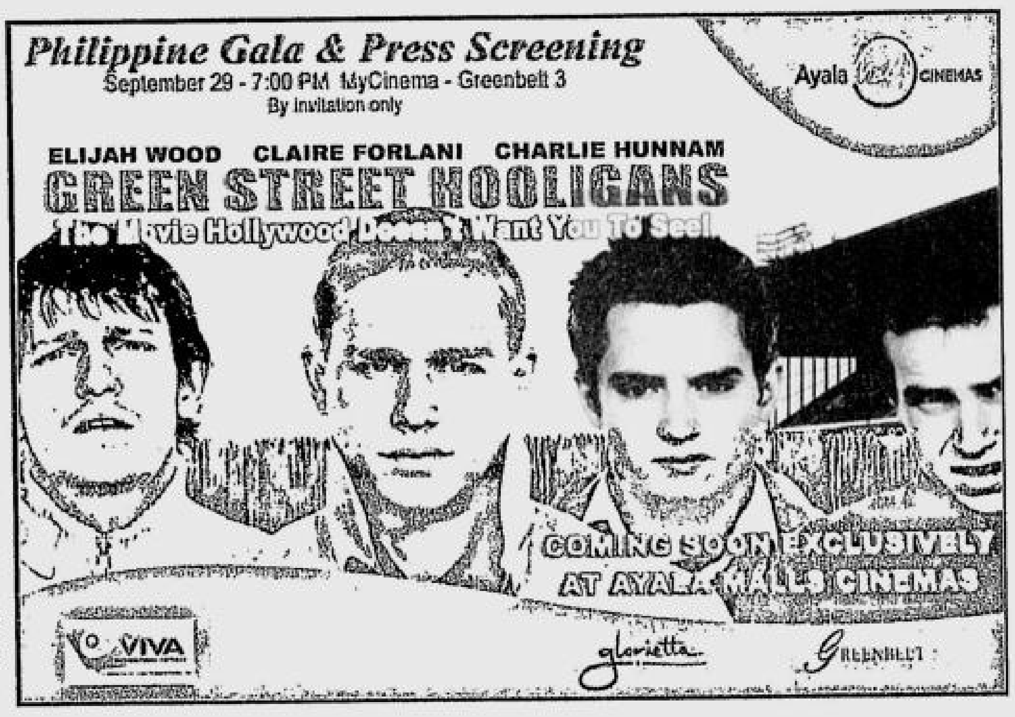
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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 FIRST DAY HIGH	2 STEP-UP	3 THX FLYBOYS GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 KINKY BOOTS	5 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE	6 ZOOM	7 DOA: DEAD OR ALIVE
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 FLYBOYS	2 ZOOM		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX FLYBOYS GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX ZOOM GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 DOA: DEAD OR ALIVE GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA GUARANTEED SEATS	5 STEP-UP GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX ZOOM GUARANTEED SEATS	2 FLYBOYS		
	3 FIRST DAY HIGH	4 DOA: DEAD OR ALIVE	5 STEP-UP	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 FLYBOYS	2 ZOOM	3 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE	4 FIRST DAY HIGH
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 FIRST DAY HIGH	2 DOA: DEAD OR ALIVE		
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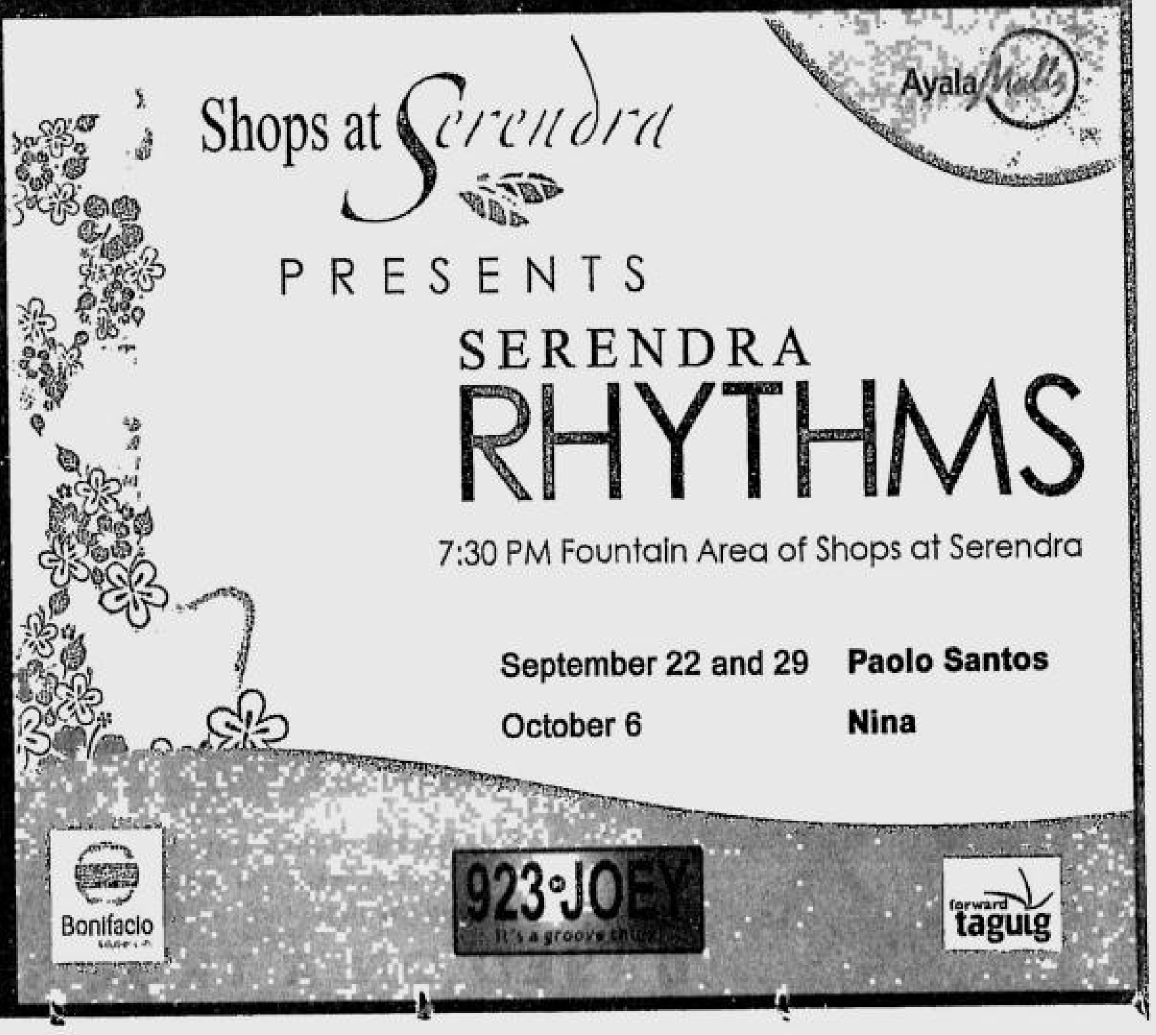
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When KC . . .

From page E4

That you can't force things to happen. That you should know if and when you should give up the "fight." That it takes two to tango … He told me, "This teaches you to just have faith."

You said that the trip confirmed some things?

Just seeing him in the flesh appeased some of the confusion I had. I finally got to ask my Papa things I had wanted out of my system. Now, I have a better understanding of exactly what happened.

In the blog, you also said your mom would walk you to the altar, what led you to this decision?

I can't imagine it any other way. For such a long time, she was both mom and dad to me. It's only natural … It's like I'm shouting it out to the world, proudly, that, through the ups and downs, she's the reason that I'm here today.

KC and her sisters Frankie (center) and Miel

PHOTO COURTESY OF KC CONCEPCION

A good friend got married recently. What was it like seeing her walk down the aisle?

How super pretty the bride looked. How beautiful our friends were in the church. And how, unlike most girls, I never dreamed of getting married even as a kid. I never had the concept of a dream wedding. Haha! Not even of a princess-like wedding gown. If you ask me now, I'd say I'd be okay for as long as the music for my wedding march is beautiful!

How have you changed after four years in France?

I think more, I know more, I feel more, I share more.

What are your future plans?

Secret! Joke *lang*. After I graduate next year, I'd like to come back to Manila and focus on writing, acting, and music.

I can't escape that. That's where God is leading me, I guess. No matter what I do to avoid the industry, I'm always pulled back … At the end of the day, you have to feel and act from your gut *nga raw*, right?

SHOW TIME

Merk's at 4

Merk's marks its fourth year with a big shebang tonight. Expected are Mon David, Vernie Varga, Eddie Katindig, Annie Brazil, among others.

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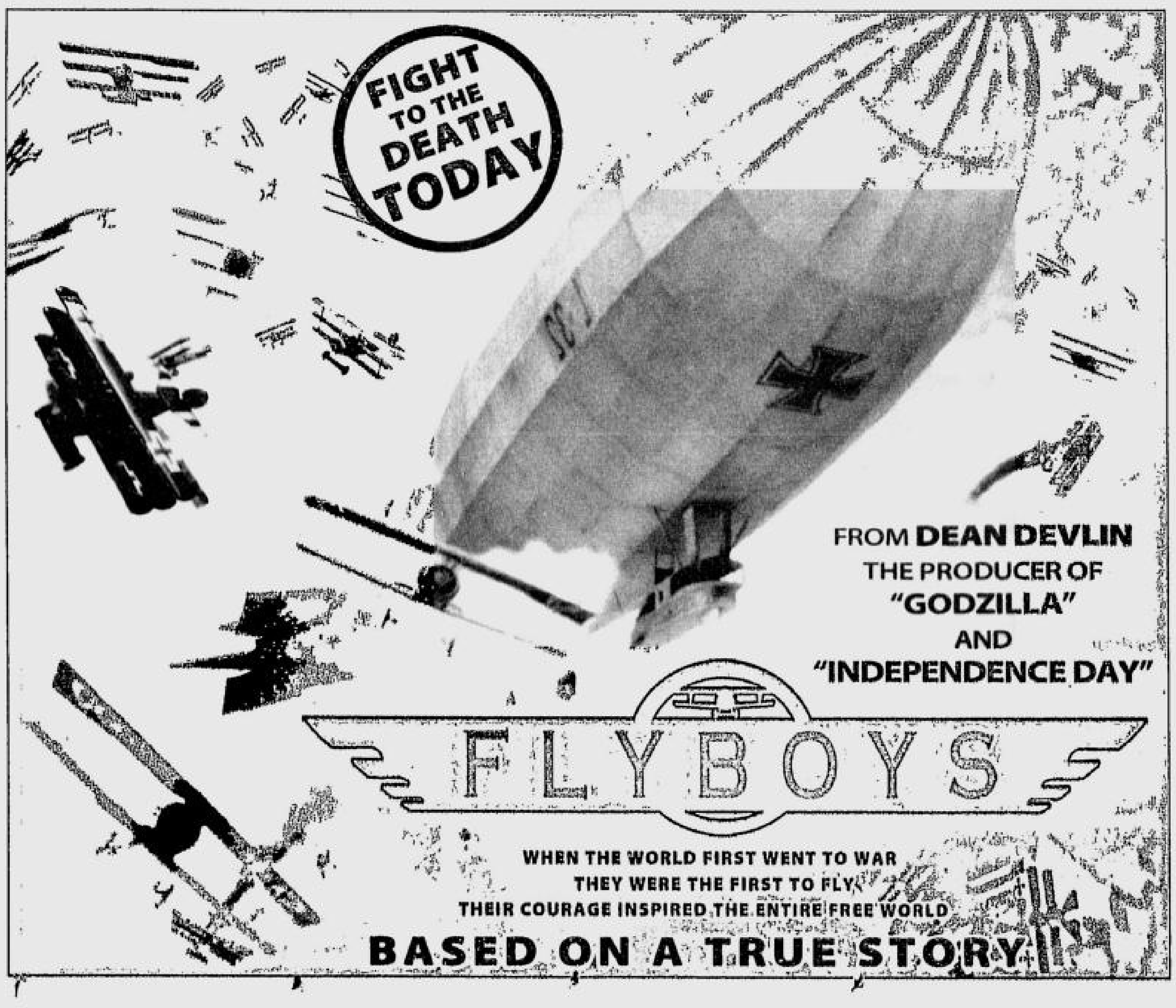
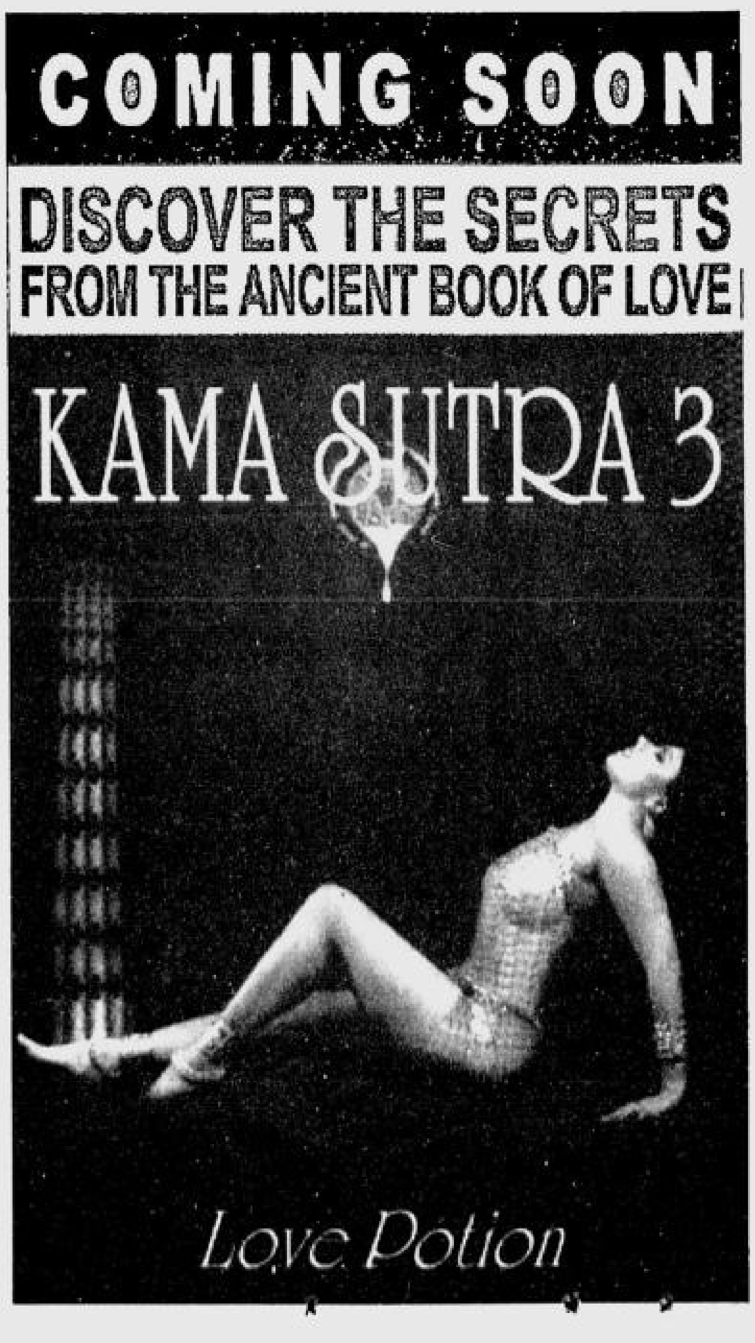


FIGHT TO THE DEATH TODAY
FROM DEAN DEVLIN
THE PRODUCER OF "GODZILLA" AND "INDEPENDENCE DAY"
FLYBOYS
WHEN THE WORLD FIRST WENT TO WAR
THEY WERE THE FIRST TO FLY
THEIR COURAGE INSPIRED THE ENTIRE FREE WORLD
BASED ON A TRUE STORY



COMING SOON
DISCOVER THE SECRETS FROM THE ANCIENT BOOK OF LOVE
KAMA SUTRA 3
Love Potion